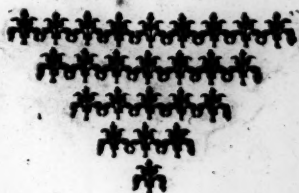


THE TWO
EPISTLES
OF
Paul to Timothy
OPENED.



I.F.

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THE END

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EPISTLE. I.

CHAP. I.

Verf. 1. Paul An Apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, our Hope.

THE first thing, here, to be considered, is the high and honourable Character of *Paul*; an Apostle, Messenger, or Ambassador of Christ. The matter of his Embassy was the unsearchable riches of Christs Person, consisting in the fellowship of the Mystery, or personal-union of divine and unchangeable righteous creature-natures or spirits, from everlasting; *Eph. 3. 8, 9.* This Mystery was not opened, till the Man Christ ascended into that Fellowship; *Job. 7. 39.* These things was *Paul* to declare, with the way and means, by which our nature in Christ, was translated out of the changable first-covenant-life of the Law, into unchangeable union with his originally unchangeable righteous creature-spirit, and divine. He was likewise to declare, that the like death of Nature, in the highest restorations of the life and righteousness of the Law, lost by the Fall, is undispensably necessary to any man's ascending into unchangeable union with the man Christ, that by such death, ascended into such union with his own creature-root, and infinite divinity. This doctrine of the Cross on nature, at best, as altogether vanity, is to be preached by Gospel-ministers, in the most insinuating way and powerful demonstration, so as to make it appear the unspeakable concern of those to whom sent, to comply with, and submit to the terms propounded from him that sends them. The Cross of Christ imports the crucifying, sacrificing-work of the everlasting and unchangeable righteous new-creature-spirit of the Gospel (in which Christ is the true *Melchisedec* or high Priest of God) on the but changable righteous first-covenant-life of the Law, in the nature of Man or Angel, at best. The devil and his angels did proudly and presumptuously set up for themselves in that fading life and glory they were possess'd of by the first creation (in a superiority to man) against the high Priest of God, and God himself. And soon was man induced to believe Satan's lye, that the Life he was possess'd of, by the first-creation, was eternal, which prevented his obedient submission to that death, which was undispensably to pass on the natural spirit of both, in order to their being saved. *Ye shall not die at all.* This is Satan's and Man's accursed other Gospel, that the first-

covenant-life of their own nature, in their first-creation-make, is eternal, so no need of a second creation or covenant. As soon as man is restored by Christ, out of the corrupt fallen nature, into the righteous life of the Law, Satan is at his elbow with the self-same lying suggestion, as to *Eve*; *Thou shalt not surely dye*. This is eternal Life. This work, *Paul* found him at, with the rich, full, first-covenant Kings, mystical Princes of this World, such as crucified Christ for the Cross-Doctrine of the second; *2 Cor.* 11. 3. *1 Cor.* 2. 8. and 4. 8. All the wisdom, life, righteousness and glory, Angel or Man were set up in, by the first-creation, from the changable, fading nature thereof, is charactered in Scripture, by the word, *Flesh, Woman*, and called *Earthly*, a glory to be done away. In distinction from, and superiority to this, the spiritual, gospel, new-creature-life of Christ, set up in man or angel, by a new creation of them, is called *Spirit, Grace, Truth, Life*, in an absolute sense, and charactered by the word *Man*, that never transgressed or could be deceived. No Female, nothing of a changable nature, in the new-creation-gospel-life of Christ. This Life brings with it, and comprehends in it the infallible Wisdom and everlasting Righteousness of God, the power of Godliness, Glory that excels, never to be done away. With this, the righteousness, wisdom, or glory; all, receiv'd by man or angel, in their first-creation, is admitted no comparison, but look'd on as a meer nullity, no glory, wisdom, life or righteousness at all; *1 Cor.* 3. 10. A true Gospel-ministry then, layes the Axe to the root of all humane interest, preaches down nature by lump, in the righteous or corrupt state thereof, as altogether Vanity, a vanishing shadow, a perishing nothing (as to the final salvation of man or angel) at best or worst, or any intermediate condition. Had first-covenant-Life, or the first-creation-state of both, been faultless, or unliable to miscarriage, and no way deficient as to their eternal blessedness, there had been no need of, or room for a second; *Heb.* 8. 7. Those that confidently set up for salvation, in the but restor'd first-covenant-life of the Law, and righteousness of man, reigning as kings there, joyn directly with Satan in his temporary worldly spirit and kingdom, as *Pseudo-fifth-Monarchists*, in opposition to Christ's everlasting Kingdom, in the Spirit of the Gospel. An immortality of being, man and angel had in their first-creation, not of Life. That is brought to light by the Gospel, and set up in both, by a new-creation. The first renew'd, is not the second. First-creation-life was old as soon as set up, or when it is a-fresh renew'd, by way of Redemption, as one fruit and benefit of the death of it, in Christ's person; because from the beginning, subject to decay, wax old, and vanish away. Gospel, or New-creation-life, is ever new, to Eternity, always fresh, green and flourishing, unsubjected to decay, old age, or death. This is called, *Newness of Life*, in which alone men can bring forth fruits unto God; *Rom.* 6. 4. and 7. 4. the other, *Oldness of letter*; in the most righteous exercise whereof, man brings forth fruit but to himself (*Hos.* 10. 1.) for the beautifying and adorning of his own nature; the visage or state whereof, Christ marr'd or destroy'd, in his own person, more than it can be marr'd in any other man, because no other man has so much of it to marr. *Newness of Life, Power of Godliness, Righteousness of God, and Image of the Heavenly*, is no otherwise attainable,

able, than by the change of the old, with its form of godliness, wisdom, and righteousness of man, in the image of the earthy, through the death and loss of all. All fading goodness in first-creation-life, is to be parted with, for what is unchangeable in the second. This Christ told the self-confident young man; *Mat. 19. 20-22.* These terms did seem so hard to the evil Angels, at first, that in the clear light of the more excellent new-creation-life and glory, shining in its own sun-beams upon them, they wilfully rejected it, and set up for themselves in the fading life they were possessed of in their natural make, by the first-creation. They knowingly rejected eternal-life, and chose eternal-death, out of self-love to the life of their own nature. Gospel-light only, secures no man or angel from the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, or wilfull rejection of the new-creature-spirit of the Gospel. This being the case, and these the terms, propounded by Christ and his Gospel-messengers, for the salvation of men, what entertainment they are like to find in this world, is easie to imagine. They preach that, which many Angels, and all men, as included in their representative, would not bear at first; and which the very Disciples, whilst Christ was but a fleshly bridegroom with them, said, *Who can bear?* Satan endeavours might and main, to deaf all Ears to these spiritual charmers, charm they never so wisely. Their message renders them, with *Jeremy, Men of contention with the whole Earth*; All, in but the Life and principles of nature, corrupt or righteous, heathen, or a first-covenant people of God, that may again become no People. These, finding all that life and mystical riches, they rest content in, for salvation, struck at, by the gospel doctrine of the Cross, have still bin the fierce, ring-leading Persecutors of the spiritual Saint. These were the mystical Briars, Thorns, and Scorpions, *Ezekiel* prophesied amongst; *Ezek. 2. 6.* These both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own Prophets; persecuted his Apostles, pleased not God, and were contrary to all men, the corrupt heathen on their left, and the spiritual Saint, on their right hand. By what usage, Christ (Gods Apostle or Messenger of his Covenant) found amongst men; men, that are his Apostles, may know what to expect. He came to his own People in the first, and they rejected, contradicted and blasphemed all his doctrine of the second, and murdered him. *The servant is not greater then his lord.* Christ, the Fathers Apostle or sent one, is not greater than he that sent him: Nor are Christs Apostles so great as he that sends them. *As thou hast sent me into the world, I have sent them.* Thou hast made me thy Apostle. I have made them my Apostles. Neither I nor they are of the world, So the world hears not, or receives, but hates and rejects us and all our words. *Jo. 15. 18,-- 20. and 17. 18.*

By the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, our Hope.

Paul was ordained an Apostle, by the appointment of God the Mediatour, in his divine and originally unchangeable creature-spirit, and by the Lord Jesus Christ, as translated out of the changeable righteous life of our nature, into the unchangeable life of both. His divine set up his own creature-spirit of everlasting righteousness,

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from

from everlasting, in unchangeable union with it self; *Prov. 8. 22, 23.* This was the creature original of Gospel-life or everlasting salvation, to angel or man, and of all right grounded hope in either, of ever seeing or enjoying the divine nature. In the most intimate marriage union, and personal conjunction of divine and creature-natures or spirits, is Christ fitted to answer all that God requires, or creatures need for true blessedness. By Gods free choice and gift, a seed of this creature-spirit was cast into the immortal spirits of men, from the date of their radical existence in him, the father of spirits. When personally exiting in this world, this seed, quickened up by Christ, the spiritual seeds-man, into its proper life and motion, is his actual giving eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. In and with this spiritual life, springs up a new unde standing in men, by which they are enabled to see all things, not only spiritual, but divine also; *The deep things of God.* They see the whole mystery of godliness, the otherwise unknown riches of Christ, on the one hand, and the otherwise undiscernable depths, wiles and methods of Satan, in his whole mystery of Iniquity, on the other, managed by first-creation-vanities, against the infinite divine, and everlasting righteous new-creature-spirit of truth. When the whole counsell of God, and mystery of godliness for the salvation of men, comes into the saints view, the whole counsel of the Devil, in his mystery of iniquity, for the damnation of men, lies open, also. They can bring up into open view, his deepest, most concealed designs and projects. The man Christ, translated by his own everlasting righteous-creature-spirit, out of the changable righteous life of the Law, into unchangeable personal union with it self, and the divine, is the only suitable means to open and let down the said blessed life unto men, and thereby to give the clear and full knowledge of the mystery of God the Father, and of Christ. Thus, in our exalted nature, is the Lord Jesus, as united to, and fill'd with divine and everlasting righteous creature-Life, the immediate object of all true Saints Faith and Hope. The mystery of divine and creature fellowship was hid, till ascended into, and opened by the Man Christ, our Hope; the certain hand and meanes of conveying the same gospel-life into men, that himself in our nature, is ascended into the full possession of. Spiritual Saints, before Christs coming in flesh, by a spiritual faith in that Gospel-life that is now brought into open view, were found in an indissoluble union therewith; and as spirits in prison or confinement, received their share in the opening of it, with saints in the body, under the Gospel-dispensation and day. Before this, it was a hidden mystery; *Rom. 16. 25, 26. Eph. 3. 8, 9.* The opening of this hidden mysterious fellowship of divine and everlasting righteous creature-nature, in Christs wonderful person, was prophesied by Saints under the Law, to be enjoyed by themselves and fellow-saints under the Gospel; *1 Per. 1. 10, 12.* For the preaching this opened mystery to others, was Paul eminently qualified and commanded by God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, our Hope.

Verf. 2. *Unto Timothy, my own Son in the Faith: Grace, Mercy, and Peace, from God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord.*

To Timothy, begotten through Paul's Ministry, into the right acknowledgment of

of Christ's person, does *Paul* desire and declare *Grace, Mercy and Peace*, handed by *Jesus Christ*, our Lord, in the capacity of exalted creature-Branch, in our nature. The creature-branch in *Christ*, is a like son to his creature Root, as that to the infinite divinity. This twofold condescension, God in his infinite wisdom found requisite both for the creation of the World, and salvation of men and angels, when made. The exalted Branch, out of changable first-creation-life, in angelical nature, from the foundation of the World; and humane nature, in the fulness of time, compleats the Mediators person, for accomplishing all the intents and purposes of God, as the immediate hand, from which, men and angels receive the full blessing of Gospel-life, *Grace, Mercy, and everlasting Peace* with God.

Verf. 3. As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some (Syriac ; every one) that they teach no other Doctrine.

Paul having left the care of the Church at *Ephesus*, to *Timothy*, when he went in the same service of *Christ* into *Macedonia*, besought him, at his departure from *Ephesus*, that he would abide there in the Ministry of the Gospel, and charge every Church-member, under Gospel-light, that they neither teach, hear, or regard any other Doctrine for salvation, or as *Christ's* Gospel. The but changably righteous life of the Law, preached up for Salvation, is man's and satan's accursed other Gospel. And *Paul* told the Elders of the Church at *Ephesus*, That after his departure thence, would arise men from among themselves, that would turn from Gospel-light, and would speak perverse things, to draw disciples after them, by preaching up Salvation in the but first-covenant-life of the Law, holy flesh, or righteousness of man, *Acts* 20. 28, -- 30.

Verf. 4. Neither give heed to Fables (the Æthiopic Version reads, Speeches of Poets) and endless Genealogies, which minister Questions, rather than godly edifying, which is in Faith.

Paul here characters that other Doctrine, by Fables and endless Genealogies, that nourish questions and endless disputes, Fables and endless Genealogies of Gods, Damons, Hero's, or Devils, and deceased Men, amounting to a labyrinth of confounded nothings, were suggested by devils, and handed to men, by poetick fiction. In this Progeny of heathen gods (and idolatrous worship of them) evil angels and men, sun, moon, stars and other creatures were promiscuously worshipped in the same Image, and by the same Name. These Fables, endless Genealogies and Confusions, in the gross, literal Idolatries of heathens, may fitly signify and point at the fabulous divinity, that teaches everlasting Salvation in the but changable first-covenant-life of the Law, clothed with the new-covenant Titles of the Gospel. What variety of form, language, opinion and way, amongst these undertakers at Gospel, in the spirit of the Law? What unprofitable janglings, innumerable questions, endless.

less disputes and writings, rendering them a meer mystical *Babel*? These all agree to build on the same sandy foundation, the restor'd righteousness of man, or life of the Law, by which to reach salvation, and climb up into heaven. But what confusions of Language and Opinion are they found in, by the way, in carrying on their vain attempt? What skirmishings for and against Free-will in all men, for salvation; neither of the Combatants owning any other Free-will than what all men lost by the first sin of the first? And this, all men may return into the exercise of, by that general deliverance out of the fall, amounting to the common Salvation. But, as to everlasting salvation, the loss of this freewill, and of all the fruits, or works of righteousness, producible or performable therein, is indispensably necessary. Never was ever-lasting life to be found in the first covenant state of man or angel, before the fall; and much lesse, since. For no restorations of it amount to the primitive personal purity in it. And in the highest restoration of it, by way of redemption, is filth of Spirit, that is, an enmity to God and his new-creature-Spirit of grace, the original of all Gospel or eternall Life. All the mystical riches of man, heaped up in the most wary and fruitfull exercise of the restored righteous life of his own nature, will vanish, as well as his bodily life and literal riches, leaving him in darknes and death, to Eternity, under the wrath of God. There is a day of adversity, legibly written out, in the vanity and perishableness of this twofold life, and riches, over against the day of mans utmost flourish or prosperity, in either; *Ec. 7. 14.* the changable good things in mans earthly nature, called by a wrong name, spiritual, heavenly and everlasting, are turned into fables, falsehoods and lies. When men have resolutely engaged to build on the Sand, or changable principles and life of the Law, for everlasting Salvation, their fallible understandings, from the husk and letter of Scripture, run them into endless Disputes, and unutterable confusions, charactred here, by *Fables and endless Genealogies*. Satan, in his superiour angelical wisdom of the first-creation-sort, can toss them up and down, into perfectly contrary thoughts and perswasions, back'd with plausible appearances and probabilities, on all bands. The spirit of this world, in man or angel, is but a spirit of darkness, as to all-things in the next. So, while man in the highest wisdom of his enlighten'd nature, is confidently undertaking at Gospel-matters, he acts but in a spirit of darkness, under the Prince of darkness, that will run him into snares, out of which he will never be able to disentangle himself, to his dying day. Man, in the highest reason, or wisdom of his own spirit, renewed and enlightned, is unreasonable at Gospel-matters, such a one as *Paul* prayed to be delivered from; *2 Thess. 3. 2.* *Paul* found those that were wise, strong, and honourable in Christ, as to the restored first-covenant-life of the Law, that he was in a universal contrariety to, in the spirit of the Gospel; *1 Cor. 4. 8.--10.* All Gospel-things and truths pass for nothing, with the highest wisdom of man. The declarers thereof are counted mad-men, fools and impertinent babblers, as the *Athenian* Philosopher termed *Paul*. The wisdom of man, is the very partition-wall and dark vail, between him and all Gospel things, or spiritual truths and sence of Scripture. Till this be pull'd down in him, to make way for the springing up of a new spiritual intellect, or discerning,

cerning, the whole Scripture is a sealed Book to him, as to all divine and spiritual things or truths, therein contained; *Es. 29. 11.* First-covenant-life, set up in, for salvation, is mans Fable. This Fable runs him into a maze of unprofitable Questions, Disputes, and Contentions, about he knows not what, instead of a right edifying, and building himself, and others up, in the faith and acknowledgement of Christ, in his Gospel-life of everlasting righteousness and truth. In this, only, true blessedness is to be found, which is the great want and secret desire of mans immortal spirit, however mistaken as to the very thing it self, eternal-life; and consequently, in the search after it, and all the ways and means of attaining it. He contends with God himself, about his salvation, and the way to it. He stands up, as *pro aris & focis*, for defence of the life and liberty of his own nature and will, against the Gospel-spirit, or Cross of Christ, by which he comes to offer up all those frail, first-creation vanities, in sacrifice to God, as he served them in his own person. All first-creation-life, is but a legal ceremony, which having served its season, against the workings of the corrupt spirit of nature, is to be abolished by the spirit of the Cross, as an antiquated thing. The death of all, man's wisdom sets up in, for salvation, is the only way, in Gods wisdom, to salvation. Gods thoughts, and so, the words of his wisdom, are perfectly contrary to mans, about Salvation. Man strives, disputes, labours and contends all the dayes of his life, against God and his declared way of salvation, to his own eternal ruine. A fore travel. In conclusion, does man come to experience, when too late, that he has been engaged, all along, in the fabulous gospel, or doctrine of devils, in stead of being edified, or edifying others in the faith of Christ.

Verf. 5. Now the end of the Commandment is Love, out of a pure heart, good conscience, and faith unfeigned.

The true end of the first-covenant-life of the Law, is by the right use of it, which is the obedient surrender and loss of it, by death, through the crucifying work of the Gospel-spirit upon it, to make way for the said Gospel-spirit of everlasting righteousness, to become the ruling principle of life and action, in man. This spirit is called *Love* (*1 Cor. 13.*) and said to be *the fulfiller of the Law*, in its comprehensive literal and mystical or spiritual voice and meaning; *Rom. 13. 10.* This is the Spirit, greater than he that is in the World, unchangably obedient to the divine will. It never sins. It unchangably loves, and is belov'd of God. The changeable life of the Law is the appointed fore-runner to the everlasting life of the Gospel. If the life, man and angel were possessed of, by the first-creation, had been everlasting, all had been saved: If not, and no other creature-life had been provided and offered them, none could be saved. In Gospel-life, only, comes man to have a true love to God, proceeding out of a pure heart, good conscience, and faith unfeigned, or such an owning of Christ as amounts to a union with him, in that life he raised our nature into, in his own person. This only gives the answer of a good conscience, towards God; *1 Pet. 3. 21.*

Verf. 6. From which, some having swerved (erred from; or not aimed at;) have turned aside, unto vain jangling.

Those that miss the right end of the Law, turn from that love or Gospel-Spirit, it directs to, in which only, a pure heart, and good conscience towards God, through an unfeigned faith in Christ, can be had. They set up Law, against the Gospel, and true use and meaning of the Law it self. And when so engaged, they give themselves up to vain jangling, contending for the evil use they make of the Law, against both Law and Gospel, in a wilful contradiction to the light of both.

Verf. 7. Desiring to be Teachers of the Law, understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm, (Syr. dispute.)

Such Teachers of the Law, as assert the life thereof, to be a Gospel-state of everlasting righteousness, exclude the spiritual sense of all Scripture. They subvert the right use of the Law, and so swerve from the Truth of both Law and Gospel. That righteous Life of the Law, Paul once thought a state of salvation, he after called a *Law and body of sin and death*; Rom. 7. 24. and 8. 2. Wilful swervers from the known truth of Law and Gospel, shut up the Kingdom of Heaven, exclude themselves, and labour to exclude others, from all the true advantages of both. From a desire to be teachers of the Law, under the Title of Ministers of the Gospel, they teach direct enmity to the Gospel, and right use of the Law. Thus wilfully swerving from the truth of both, they lanch forth into a world of vain janglings and endless contentions, to defend their mystical Idol, against God, Christ, and Gospel-Saints. They exclude all Gospel and true Gospel-Saints, out of their pretended Gospel-Ministry and Churches. They assert meer contradictions and utter impossibilities, both in the things they contend for and against. They deny the everlasting righteousness of the Gospel-Spirit, and affirm it to be in the spirit and life of the Law, in flat contradiction to the known unchangable nature of the former, and changable nature of the latter. And in both these most false assertions, do they give a certain demonstration of their unchangable hatred to Christs Spirit of truth, and unalterable love to their own spirit of falshood.

Verf. 8. But we know that the Law is good, if a man use it lawfully;

Gospel-saints know the true use and advantage of the Law. It calls man, first, out of the barren wilderness of his polluted nature, into the righteous life thereof. The second voice of it, gives a back-blow on all the fruit and product of its first, as but a flower of the field, a perishing vanity. This is the negative part of the second Testimony of the Law; that everlasting righteousness or salvation is not in it, or in the life, by its first voice, set up, afresh, in man. The affirmative part of its spiritual Voice or Testimony, is, *That the Word of God shall stand for ever*; Esa. 40.

Gal. 3. This word of God, is the Gospel-spirit of Christ, that declares the whole counsel of God, to angel and man. So, he that obeys the full Testimony of the Law, is led to Christ, for that everlasting Gospel-life, others vainly seek for, in the Law, against its own testimony.

Verf. 9. Knowing this, that the Law is not made for a righteous man; but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholly and profane, for murderers of Fathers and Mothers, for man-slayers.

Verf. 10. For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with man-kind, for men-stealers, for lyars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, (or, to the sound doctrine of the Gospel, &c. as the Syriac Version, running the tenth and eleventh Verses together.)

The Law, in its various but most harmonious Testimonies, is fully answered by the truly Spiritual, Gospel-righteous man, who, in obedience to its own counsel, has delivered himself up into the hands of another Governour, the Gospel-spirit of Christ. The Law has nothing to do with, or say to, or against such a man. He is dead to it, as to that first-covenant-life, in which, for a season, it required active obedience. So, by passive obedience to its spiritual voice, in submitting to the death of that state, under the Gospel-spirit, it is lawfully discharged from performing any obedience to the Law, in the active power of that life. To continue to obey the Law, in that Life, when by the spiritual Testimony thereof, required to part with it, in order to live unto God, in his Gospel-spirit of everlasting-life, is rebellion against both Law and Gospel. And to cease from obeying it in the former life, in order to live unto God, in the latter, is the perfect fulfilling of the whole Law, in the spirit of the Gospel. The Law of God requires more than ever could be done by angel or man, in the active power of their first-creation-life: but, not more than can be done in that more excellent creature-life and way, which the Law itself, by its second voice, shews the necessity of parting with the other, for. When a man is possessed of a better life and righteousness than the Law has to give (but which it directs to Christ, for) he is fully discharged, acquitted and justified by that, also. He is eternally justified by the spirit of the Law, spirit of the Gospel, and God himself, the infinite divine Spirit. No Light, Truth, or Law will accuse or condemn him, or has any thing to say against him. *Against such, there is no Law; Gal. 5. 22. 23.* So, the Law is not made for the Gospel-righteous man.

But for the lawless and disobedient, &c.

All, within the compass of their own nature, corrupt or righteous (resting confident there, short of the grace of God, or that newness of life, in which they can bring forth fruit unto God) do fall under this black character of *lawless, disobedient, &c.* In the corrupt spirit of nature, are men guilty of the sins here mentioned, in the gross, literal sense of the words. In the restored, righteous spirit of nature, confidently rested in, and set up against the Gospel-spirit of Grace, do men become guilty of all sorts of spiritual, mystical abominations, called by the same names, of

a more criminal and provoking nature, than the literal. Enmity to God and his Gospel-spirit, and so to the power of godliness therein, under the form of godliness and righteousness of man, is the root of all. A fixed self-love to their own nature, in the first-covenant-life of the Law, renders them unchangable enemies to God and the second. So, are they turned from a first-covenant people of God, into a Synagogue of Satan, in unchangable union of mind with him, who first set up the changable first-covenant-life and fading glory of his angelical nature, in unchangable enmity to God and the second. Thence-forward, are they found in the practice of all mystical whordoms, adulteries, idolatries, murders, thefts, &c. in unchangable harmony of mind with the evil angels, against God, Christ, and all his Gospel-truths and Saints. They that give up themselves to the vile affections of the corrupt spirit of nature, with litteral *Sodom*, the vengeance of eternal fire is the meet recompence of their errour; *Rom. 1 26, 27. Jude. vers. 7.* And, to the same dreadful end, come all such first-covenant-saints or people of God, with their holy flesh, form of godliness, and righteousness of man, that set up there, for salvation, in unchangable enmity to the new-creature, gospel-spirit, power of godliness and righteousness of God. This turns the mystical earthly *Jerusalem*, into spiritual *Sodom, Egypt, and Babylon*. The three Witnesses, Law, Gospel, and God himself, that acquit and justify the spiritual righteous man, will accuse and condemn these, for ever. *Moses*, or the Law, which they reckon, justifies them in the Letter, by the spiritual voice of it, condemns them; and this, without any inconsistency of its various testimonies. So are they gone, every way. All light and truth is against them; *Joh. 5. 45.* The Law, in its accusing and condemning power, is made for both these sorts of lawless persons, that fix either in the corrupt or righteous state of their own nature, and so, in unchangable enmity to God and his Gospel-spirit of grace. But the lawless persons, chiefly here meant, are such, as by the lawful use of the righteous life of the Law, sin unpardonably against the Holy Ghost, or Spirit of the Gospel. So, fall they under just condemnation, from Law and Gospel, as not using the former, in obedience, but opposition to the latter. So are they lawless persons; against all Law, and all Law against them; both the Law they pretend obedience to, and the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, and the infinite divine Mind or Law, which ought to be obeyed by all angels and men.

And if there be any other thing contrary to the sound doctrine

Vers. 11. Of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

Here are two things to be considered. 1. What is this glorious Gospel? 2. How committed to *Paul*, in way of Trust? Himself informs, both what this Gospel is, and how he came to be intrusted with it; *Ephes. 3. 1, -- 9.* The matter of Gospel is, the unfearchable riches of Christs person, consisting in the fellowship of his divine and creature-spirits. These glorious Treasures were lock'd up in a Mystery, till the Man Christ ascended into this divine and creature-fellowship, in the Mediatour;

atour; *John 7. 39. Rom. 16. 25, 26.* The first signal opening of this Gospel-mystery, we find *Act. 2.* The same hand opened it to *Paul*, in the way to *Damascus*. By the revelation of the Son of God in him, was he meetly qualified to preach that Gospel-life, himself was partaker of. He ascribes all his Gospel-labours, to the grace of God in him; *1 Cor. 15. 10.* Thus came the Gospel-treasure to be committed to his trust, as a Minister of Christ, and Steward of the Mysteries of God, in Christ's wonderful person, to declare the whole counsel and contrivance of God, about the salvation of Men.

Verf. 12. And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the Ministry.

A gift of the Gospel-spirit of Christ (that is part of the mystery it self) participated to *Paul*, was both the revealer of the whole mystery to him, the receiver of it, in him, and declarer of it, unto others. He gives solemn thanks to Christ, for this unspeakable mercy, shewed him, with these heightning circumstances, even at the very instant, when he found him in a full career of Persecuting enmity against him; as himself declares.

Verf. 13. Who was before, a Blasphemer, a Persecutour, and Injurious. But I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly, in unbelief.

Paul here magnifies the grace of God, by shewing what sad circumstances he was in, immediately before his Gospel-conversion. He was eminent in the life of the Law, and remarkable in enmity to the life of the Gospel, in Christ and his followers. By Gospel-light he finds himself to be a blasphemer, persecutor and injurious, in that very thing, wherein he, before, verily thought he had done God service. He utterly denied the Gospel-spirit and words thereof. For this, he takes shame to himself, as of the highest rank of pardonable sinners against the Holy Ghost. But, to his unspeakable joy, the Lord bestowed, and he obtained that mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto eternal-life, he was fighting against. In the highest first-covenant-life and wisdom of man, he was in a total ignorance of all Gospel-matters and life. He was (in a sort) faithful to the light he had; when he persecuted the Gospel. Yet, in God's sight (and after, in his own also) he was therein, a Blasphemer, persecutor and injurious. He was judged faithful to his light, under the Law, and put into the ministry of the Gospel, he persecuted. He was immediately obedient to the heavenly Vision, as soon as Christ in his Gospel-light shin'd upon him, saying, *Who art thou, Lord? What wilt thou have me to do? Act. 9. 5, 6.* He presently owned Christ for his Lord, and engaged to obey his commands. So, was owned by Christ himself, to *Ananias*, *As a chosen Vessel, to bear his Name, or preach his Gospel, to Gentils, Kings, and the Children of Israel; Verf. 15.*

Verf.

Verf. 14. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant, with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

The super-abounding grace of God was manifested in pardoning all his persecution and blasphemy, and bestowing upon him that unspeakable Gospel-life and treasure, he blasphemed and persecuted. On this, his faith in, and love to Christ in his Gospel-life, abounded also. His ready obedience to the heavenly Vision of it, as soon as given, was as remarkable, as his blasphemy and persecuting enmity against it, had been. In his newness of light and life, he presently fell to Gospel-work, and laboured therein, more abundantly than all the other Apostles, that were in Christ before him; *1 Cor. 15. 10. Yet, not I, faith he, but the grace of God which was with me.* And, for this sudden transformation of an outrageous Persecutor, into a Powerful preacher of the Gospel, other Saints glorified God, and magnified the abundant mercy, shewed him and them, therein. The Gospel Churches of Judea, when they heard, that he which persecuted them, now preached the faith, he once destroyed; they glorified God in him; *Gal. 1. 22,--24.* The consequence of his Gospel-conversion was so great, that whereas all was in a flame before, *The Churches had rest throughout all Judea, &c. and walking in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied; Act. 9. 31.*

Verf. 15. This is a faithfull saying, and worthy of all acceptation; that Christ Jesus came into the World, to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

Paul here declares his own happy experience of Christ's coming into the World to save sinners. All man-kind are sinners, cast by the first sin, into a two-fold death; The first, by the losse of the changably righteous first-covenant life of their nature, wherein created. The second is found in the restored righteous Life of their nature, consisting in filth of spirit, or enmity of the natural spirit, at best, to the Gospel-spirit of Christ and righteousness of God, therein. Paul himself was a signal instance, for this, who in the renewed life of the Law, persecuted and blasphemed the spirit of the Gospel, and all the words of its life and wisdom. All men, then, within the compass, and in the life of their own nature, corrupt or righteous, are concluded under sin, both Jews and Gentils, Heathens, or first-covenant Saints, with their holy flesh, under the dispensation of Law or Gospel; *Rom. 3. 9. All the World is guilty before God; v. 19.* Neither circumcision or uncircumcision, righteous or corrupt nature avails any thing, but only the new-creature-life of the Gospel-spirit of Christ, in man, for salvation. *Gal. 6. 15.* No being in Christ, or owning of him, saving in his Gospel-life, is salvation. And this cannot be received by any, but through the death and abolition of the life of nature, which, in whatever variety of condition, is found in enmity to it. Yea, in Christ's example, we find, that were there neither actuall corruption, nor enmity, filth of flesh nor spirit in our nature, the life of it, as a changable thing, a fading flower, altogether vanity, must, by a Law of invincible necessity, pass away, in order to our being possessed

of the everlasting life of the gospel-spirit of Christ, into which he raised our nature in his own person. Of the whole rout of sinners, that are found in a twofold state of sin and death, in the corrupt or righteous life of nature, *Paul*, in the righteous life thereof, declares himself the chief or greatest sinner, of all that stand capable of the mercy shewed him, having furiously expressed his enmity against the Gospel-spirit, in which alone, he or any can be saved. He breathed out threatnings and slaughter against the professors of it, being exceedingly mad against them; *Act. 9. 1. and 26. 11.* Yet, his totall ignorance of that blessed life he persecuted, rendred him a capable partaker of it.

Verf. 16. Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first, Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a Pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him, to life everlasting.

He farther magnifies the grace of God, over-ruling all his evil practice against the Gospel, not only for good to himself, but others also; and this, as one ground and cause of his obtaining mercy. He thus became a pattern to others, in the most dangerous engagements against the Gospel, imaginable, short of a knowing, wilfull sinning against the Holy Ghost, (or new-creature-gospel-spirit of Christ) not to cast off all hopes of being saved, when convinced of their mistake, therein. For this cause, was *Paul*, at the highest pitch of a pardonable Blasphemer and Sinner against the Holy Ghost, pardoned, and received into favour. Here is a fair Door of Hope, open, for Professors of Godliness, in the form thereof, righteousness of man, or first-covenant-life of the Law, though engaged in a mistaken zeal, against the Gospel. They are yet capable of that Gospel life, they oppose. Those that have the Spiritual Seed of a Gospel-life in them, till it be quickned into life and exercise, may be found, with *Paul*, the most blustering ring-leaders against the Gospel. The seaven thousand in *Israel*, seen by God, in the Seed of Spiritual Sainthood, might be engaged, for a season, amongst the general rout of enemies to the true Spirit of Prophecy, in *Elias*. But this hopefulness to pardonable persecutours of the Gospel, in *Pauls* example, speaks not the least encouragement to any, for engaging in the like persecuting practices he was found in, but serves to keep them from despair of Gospel-mercy, though as deeply engaged against it, as he, so it be as Ignorantly and Innocently. Let men follow this pattern of Gods long-suffering, in his ready obedience to the Gospel-life and doctrine of Christ, as soon as convincingly made known to them, and all wil be well. He is a pattern only to such as shall believe on Christ, to life everlasting.

Verf. 17. Now unto the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the only wise God, be Honour and Glory, for ever and ever, Amen.

The man Christ, as in our nature, through death, exalted into the possession of the divine and everlasting righteous life of his creature-root and divine Father, is King over all, in both Worlds, friends and foes. At his return from Heaven, his
far

far countrey, into an open, discernable manifestation and visibility, in his conjunctive divine and new-creature life and glories, will he take unto himself his great power, and reign over all the earth. He is the man, that in his appointed day, will judge the world in righteousness; *Luke 19. 12. Act. 17. 31.* Christ, or God the Mediator (in the power of divine and creature-life, which our nature, in him, is now possessed of) made both worlds, by a first and second creation; first, that which is natural; and after, that which is spiritual; so, is Heir and Judge of all, in both; *Heb. 1. 2.* 'Tis the Man Christ, as risen into the conjunctive divine and creature-life of his Root and Father, the utmost parts of the earth are given into the possession of; *Psal. 2. 7. 8. Act. 13. 32, 33. Job, 5. 22, -- 27.* The certainty of his return from Heaven, to take his right, herein, is but what God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy Prophets, since the world began; *Act. 3. 20, 21.* Christ refused to be a King or Judge, as son of man in Flesh, but as son of God in Spirit, he will reign and prosper, execute Judgement and Justice in the earth; *Jer. 23. 5.* Then his invincible saints, shall be manifested in that spiritual-life, that has been hid with Christ in God, and all the shame cast upon them, by visible saints, with their holy flesh, laid at their own doors, as the most criminal of all sinners. No clear and generally discernable distinction, between the truly spiritual righteous, and the most criminal haters of them, till the manifestation of the Sons of God, at Christ's appearance in the glory of his spiritual Life and Kingdom; *Es. 66. 5.* Then will true Saints have their turn, to reign on the earth; *Rev. 5. 10.* First-covenant-saints, as little understand, at this day, the Scriptures, relating to Christ's second coming, in spirit, as the Jews did his first coming in flesh. None will be more amazed and frightened at the appearance of this new-creation King, with his spiritual Saints, than those hypocritical Sinners in *Sion*, first-covenant-saints, in the life of the Law, that have confidently reckoned themselves heirs of that kingdom, they'll be found to be the most criminal opposers of. True Saints will shout aloud for joy, at the coming forth of this heavenly King, in and through whom, the only wise God can be seen and enjoyed; *Rev. 11. 15, -- 17. and 19. 6.* To this immortal King and the only wise God, will they ascribe honour and glory, for ever and ever, *Amen. Amen.* *Amen*, is an Hebrew word, retained in all Languages, because not expressible in its various significancy, by any one word, in any other. It signifies Truth, or Christ himself, in his Gospel, new-creature-spirit of everlasting righteousness and truth; *Rev. 1. 18. and 3. 14.* At end of Prayers, Blessings and Imprecations, it imports an earnest wishing the thing desired, and strong belief, it will be done. In the beginning of speech, it signifies a strong asseveration of what is said; *Verily, verily, or Amen; Amen, I say unto you*, frequently used by Christ himself, in the Gospels. Christ, in his everlasting righteous creature-life, is the immortal King, thorow whom, honour and glory is ascribed, by blessed angels and saints, to the only wise God, the infinite divine spirit. To this Doxology, they all say, *Amen.*

Verf. 18. *This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the Prophecies which went before on thee (or, which went before thee) that thou by them mightest war a good warfare.*

Paul charges Timothy, as the matter of his Gospel-faith, to declare to others, as he had to him, That Christ, the Eternal, Immortal, and Invisible King, is made by the only wise God, under him, ruler over all things. This is Timothy to do, in order to beget the like faith in others, he had, in him, by his Gospel-Ministry. And so will Timothy be found in harmony with all the Prophecies in the same spirit of Jesus, before him, since the world began. All holy Prophets have witnessed Christ to be the Eternal, Immortal, invisible King, and only wise God. This, Christ committed to Paul's trust (verf. 11.) and he, here, to Timothy's. And in the faithful discharge hereof, will Timothy be found in Union with the spirit of Christ, in all the former Prophets. And so will he be enabled to war a good warfare, in maintaining the said Truth, against all contradiction, without any fear of the stout words and big looks of men, which brings into Satans snare. True Witnesses of Christ, must be stout Souldiers, fitted by a holy fearlessness, to bear any hardships to their natural man, for the Testimony given by their spiritual. Jeremy's natural man sometimes shrunk and started, but his spiritual presently fell on, again; Jer. 20. 8, 9 The like we find in David; Psal. 39. 1, -- 3.

Verf. 19. *Holding Faith, and a good Conscience, which some having put away, concerning Faith, have made shipwrack,*

By Timothy's faithful discharge of his Gospel-trust, and maintaining the good warfare belonging to the same, will he hold fast his Gospel-Faith and good Conscience. The Faith and good Conscience that may be Shipwrack'd and lost, import not Gospel-life, but light only, by the beaming forth of the new-creation-Sun of everlasting righteousness upon men, in which it shews and offers its life to them, and convincingly evidences the terms on which it can be received, the death of nature, at best. Such spiritual illumination is called a partaking of the holy Ghost, a tasting of the heavenly gift, good word of God, and powers of the world to come, which wilfully apostatiz'd from, lays men under an impossibility of recovery; sets them out of all distance, as to any more benefit of Christ's sacrifice, for ever; Heb. 6. 4, -- 6. and 10. 26, 27. They see, hate, and enter into a combination with the Devil, to do despite to the spirit of Grace, after sanctified or cleansed from filth of flesh; verf. 29. This willful sin against the Holy Ghost, leaves no place for repentance or change of mind. Yet are there pardonable degrees, in turning from such Gospel-faith, as spiritual light amounts unto, which is called, a beginning in the spirit. Otherwise, the bewitch'd Galatians had not stood capable of recovery. Though through strength of temptation and weakness of flesh, they were frighted with the Gospel-doctrine and spirit, (that spoke nothing but fire, sword, cross, war and death to their

their holy flesh) and retreated into the cool shade of a worldly Church, that sooth'd them up with hopes of Salvation therein ; Yet, were they capable, not only of recovering the right exercise of their Gospel-light, but also, of having the birth of Christ's Gospel-life brought forth in them (through *Paul's* farther Gospel-labour with them) that's absolute salvation ; *Gal. 1. 1,--3. and 4. 19.* The clost, obedient following Gospel-light, till partakers of Gospel-life, compleates the Gospel-good-conscience towards God. So much, as to what the holding faith and a good Conscience is. *Secondly*, Then, what's the losing and ship-wracking one and the other ? The putting away the good conscience, and shipwracking the Faith here meant, implies their having had both, that so do. Ye began in the spirit, and ran well, for a season, in a faithfulness to the light thereof, who did hinder or drive you back to a confidence in the flesh, that ye should not go on, in your well begun-obedience to the spirit ? *Gal. 5. 7.* The light of the Faith of the Son of God, may, for a season, be followed, and then, finally, with the good conscience, attending such obedience to the Gospel-spirit, be ship-wrack'd and lost. The life of the faith of the Son of God can never be so apostatiz'd from. While Gospel-light is a supernatural gift, superadded ornament, and advance to restor'd, enlightned nature, man is apt, from self-interest, to make much of it, own and profess it. But when the Gospel-cross or flaming-spiritual sword is discovered, and speaks death or abolition both to this Gospel-conviction-light, and the life of nature, at best, advanced thereby, as undispensably necessary to the partaking of and feeding on Christ's Gospel-life, and meats, this, when man is found boggling and startling at, so as to look back, Satan is ready at hand with all worldly allurements and witch-crafts, to chear and build him up in a dire& enmity to all ; and resolution, never to look that way more. The Gospel-spirit of Christ, is the Cross, or flaming Sword, that admits no passage for man to the Tree of Life, but by passing under it. This Sword both kills and sets fire on the spirit of man, at best, in order to translate it out of the death of its sacrificed nature, into the life of God's sacrificing High-Priest. They that own Christ, as the Apostle and High-Priest of their Profession (*Heb. 3. 1.*) should not refuse to give up themselves by his hand, in sacrifice to God. The Law-Priest sacrificed clean beasts, types of cleansed, righteous men. The Gospel-Priest sacrifices the cleansed spirits of such righteous men. If men turn from Gospel-light, when thereby brought to this fiery-tryal ; away go God, Christ, Faith and good Conscience, all, that's in any sence, spiritually good, to welcome the Devil, with his worldly glories, and pleasing offers of perishing vanities. And thus comes the Vessel it self, mans immortal spirit, in which this sort of Gospel-faith and good conscience were, to be totally split, and ship-wrack'd, through his impetuous storms and temptations, on all hands ; And so, the whole treasure once put into the said mystical Ship, lost, to the everlasting ruine thereof. Christ, in the all-powerfull life of his Gospel-spirit, is the sure Anchor within the Vail, to which mans immortal spirit being firmly tied and fastened, by a union with him in the very life thereof, becomes unmovable under all storms and tempests of the evil one, *Mat. 7.*

Verf. 26. *Of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander, whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.*

These two persons had Ship-wracked the Gospel-faith, and put away the good conscience, above-meant. *Paul's* delivering them up to Satan, for so doing, seems not to be in order to their final ruine, but recovery out of the said evil; that they may learn, not to blaspheme. This is the reason or designed end of the punishment. They turned from that Gospel-light, in which Christ shewed and offered them his Gospel-life. They had, for a season, owned and followed Christ, in his Gospel-life, by his Gospel-light. The turning from and slighting all, is reckoned a blaspheming or speaking evil of the Holy Ghost or Gospel-spirit. Such faults must not pass unproved or unpunished, even in those, who at bottom, are true spiritual saints. Such turning from Christ, through weakness of flesh, and strength of temptation, short of a wilful, fixed hatred of Christ in his Gospel-life, is pardonable. In this case, the design of delivering them up to Satan, is the delivering them, for ever out of his hands. Satan, finding such persons, his unwilling captives, not obedient subjects, being unalterably principled for the service of another Master, will insult over and buffet them. But all he can do herein, is over-ruled by Christ, for the destruction of their flesh, that's his own party and salvation in Christ's spirit, that, he cannot touch. To this end, by *Paul's* order, in the Gospel-name, spirit and power of Christ, was the incessuous *Corinthian* delivered up to Satan; *1 Cor. 5. 1, -- 5.* Such enlightened Gospel-saints, on their turning from Christ, delivered up to Satan, may possibly by his powerful influencings and buffetings, be hurried into literal uncleannesses also, the gross abominations of the corrupt spirit of nature, for the marring and spoiling their holy flesh, the wrong way, by the unrighteousness of man, not righteousness of God. But even such gross sins, can God over-rule the venom of, and make the recovered Saint, with *David, Solomon* and others (when reflecting on all, in the sanctuary light of Christ's Gospel-spirit) to abhor their own nature at best, and resolutely part with the life thereof, which they find not fence-proof against such gross and detestable vilenesses, as expose them to censure from the restored light of reason, in all mankind. But, such as Satan finds to be his resolved faithful subjects, on their turning from Christ, he will pamper, fill, adorn, beautify, and advance them, with his superiour angelical first-creation excellencies, in that first-covenant-life and righteousness of their inferiour humane nature, they have resolutely turned to, in order to joyn with him in the unchangeable enmity thereof, to God and the second. As for the spiritual saint, that's at bottom, Christ's willing subject, and Satans unwilling captive, is the spirit of Christ, Satan strikes at, in him, but can hit nothing but flesh. So Christ makes all his permitted buffetings of them, and insultings over them, exactly serviceable to his design of love to them, by carrying on the work of his Cross, upon them, for their salvation, in direct contrariety to Satans design, for destroying them. In his buffetings of them, will he upbraid them with their disobedience, through his seducements

to Christ, their true Lord and Husband; for which, their own Consciences reproach them, as sinners against his spiritual light, in them. By this means, he endeavours to bring them into such distraction and confusion, as from the seeming desperateness of their condition, utterly to abandon that light of Christ, as having sinned themselves out of all reach of his sacrifice, or hope of his favour. And then, to alleviate their sorrows, does he labour to gain them, in this confusion of mind, to listen to his offers of setting them up in the freedom, life, and glory of their own nature (beyond what they ever yet experienced) by his angelical communications; and as their only retreat into a quiet repose, requires them to give themselves wholly up, to his conduct, for ever. But Christ over-rules all these attempts of Satan, upon his true Saints, so as to extinguish his own party and interest in them, by his own hand; that carnal mind of enmity, that was the Blasphemer.

C H A P. II.

- *Verf. 1. I exhort therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men.*

ALL men, without exception, are daily receivers of good from God, in one kind or other, for which, thanks are to be paid to God, by saints, on their behalf, and by themselves, too; *Act. 14. 17.* God causes his Sun to rise, and Rain to fall on the evil and on the good, just and unjust; *Mat. 5. 45.* Christ, a twofold mystical Sun and fountain of Waters, shines forth more or less, on the spirits of all men, for the lightning every man that comes into the world, with natural or spiritual, first or second covenant-light, and causes his rain to fall on all, for the rendring the mystical earth of their nature, fruitful in works of righteousness, of one sort or other, if the fault be not in themselves. All this is figured out, by the literal Rain and Sun. Any degree of first-covenant-light, or restored rational light of nature, in man, directs and leads him towards a first-covenant-life, and righteousness of man. This light is the law of nature in all mankind, excusing or accusing them, accordingly as they comply with, or rebel against it. And their natural conscience is rendred good or evil, by doing what they know is good, or evil. This first-covenant-light of the Law, in all mankind, is able to discover to man, and convince him, that there is no safe standing for him, as to true blessedness, in that life of his own nature. For that, at best, was lost by all men, in and with the first. And, in every mans experience, does not secure from such common sins, as lay them under just reproof and condemnation, from the very law of nature, or common light of reason in themselves and all other men. So then, more or less, all men are under something of conviction, that no such thing as true blessedness or eternal-life is ever to be found or had in that life of their own nature, corrupt or righteous, which evidences

hence it self to every mans experience, to be a fading flower. Now, for these general benefits, provided for all men, are true Saints to pay thanks to God, and pray for all mens willing receiving and right improving of, for their good. And they ought also, to make their supplications, prayers, and intercessions, on the behalf of all men, as to what they yet stand greatly in need of (when actual partakers of all the common and general benefits of Christs death) even that greater good and mercy, than either they had or lost in their first parents, a spiritual and everlasting righteous life, the Gospel Pearl, the unspeakable gift.

Verf. 2. For Kings, and all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty.

1. Who are these Kings and men in Authority? 2. For what end are Saints to put up their prayers with thanksgiving, on their behalf? To the first, Kings and those in Authority, are such as are set up, either in a civil or religious capacity, to exercise visible rule over others, whether men or saints. For them, as such, tis the true saints duty, to pray, that the Lord would bestow upon them, his spirit of everlasting righteousness, which alone can teach and effectually enable them, rightly to discharge their place and duty, in either of the said Governments, they exercise over them. For, he that ruleth over men, must be just, ruling in the fear of God; 2 Sam. 23. 3. No man is compleatly qualified for ruling over men, but in Christs Gospel-spirit of everlasting righteousness. This only can teach men the right ordering of their steps, in the government of themselves or others. Those words in *Samuel*, do chiefly relate to the Man Christ, himself, as a prophecy of what he shall be seen to be, at his second coming, in his Fountain creature-spirit of everlasting righteousness, as fully accomplished to rule over all, and fulfil the whole will of God, therein. By partaking of this spirit only, can Rulers over men, in Church or State, truly answer their high Place and Office, by a right encouraging of all good works and workers, and becoming a reproof and terrour, to evil. And so only, can they fully evidence, that they bear not the sword of power and authority, in vain. *Rem. 13. 3, 4.* This would truly render them a blessing to the People, under their government. For then, all under them, that live in all godliness and honesty, would not be disturbed or interrupted in their good and well-pleasing way to God, but countenanced and encouraged, Then would obedience be payd by Saints to them, as Christs true Vice-gerents. By this Character of what a true Magistracy and Ministry should be, have we, as in type and figure, what, most certainly will, in truth and substance, be manifested, at Christs second coming, to Rule over the world in general; and saints, in particular. As to his true saints, the obedience as well as command, will be given and paid, in one and the same spirit of everlasting righteousness, in head and members, governours and governed. The Governour will command nothing, but what's the known gain and true interest of the governed to obey him, in. Where the interests and designs of the governours and governed, are in a flat contrariety, all is in pieces. The utmost extent then of saints prayers and long;

longing desires, on the accounts above mentioned, is, that they may see the King, whose unquestionable right it is, take to himself his great power and reign over all. For, under him only, can they ever find the compleat fulfilling of these words, their leading a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty.

Verf. 3. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour.

That is, such Rule or Government, as is exercised in a spirit of everlasting righteousness and truth. This is acceptable to God, and so are saints earnest supplications and unceasing prayers to him, for it. Under the active reign of Christ, will true saints, in their unchanged bodies, find nothing to hurt or disturb them, in all his holy mountain, or kingdom; *Es. 11. 9.* They therefore, ought to be hastening to the coming of this day of God (*1 Pet. 3. 12*) in their unceasing prayers and preparations for it, by daily more and more clearing themselves from all filth of flesh and spirit, according to the purification of the new-creature sanctuary of God, the Fountain-gospel-spirit in Christs person. And, in another sense, they are not to make haste (*Es. 28. 16.*) by any sinful impatience, murmuring, or discouragement at the long delay of his coming, or, by antidating the time, through a misinterpreting such passages of Scripture, as relate thereunto, in their own fallible understandings and conceptions. At the end, the Vision will speak and not lie, or be found a false prediction, though so reckoned, all along Satans active reign over this world, and exploded by his Apostles, as a diabolical illusion. Though it tarry, yet wait for it. For it will come, and not tarry, beyond the appointed time; *Hab. 2. 2, 3. Psal. 102. 13.* Gods long-suffering towards his, and his saints enemies, is the trial of their patience, till all enemies sins, and saints sufferings be fulfilled.

Verf. 4. Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the Truth.

It is the good will of God, all should be restored into the first-covenant righteous life of their own nature, lost by the fall. This is the first great benefit of the death of our nature, and surrender of that righteous life in sacrifice to God, in Christs person. This is the common, general, or universal salvation, all men are capable of, and may actually receive, if they will. This first benefit of Christs death, is, in some degree, as to the restored light of nature, actually received by all; and may be received in the life thereof. And hereby are they afresh capacitated for the knowledge of the Truth (or Gospel-life in Christs new-creature-spirit, that is everlasting righteousness and truth) by its own beamings forth upon their natural understandings. This spiritual light discovers that life in Christ, that is absolute salvation to all the partakers thereof. But, this Gospel-life in Christ, is refused, hated and finally turned from, by those that it is shewed and offered to, in and by its own convincing spiritual light, as the righteous life of mans own nature is, by thousands, that are convincingly shewed and offered that, in and by that common and general light of nature,

nature, set up afresh in every man that comes into this world. By the first benefit of Christs death (the restored light, or also life of mans own nature) are all brought, more or less, into what will be interpreted a kind of view and knowledge of their needing what was, at first, figuratively represented to *Adam*, in the Tree of Life; even that more excellent creature-life, in the Mediatour, in which any man or angel ever could be saved. By the first benefit of Christs death, to all men (the light and life of the Law) are they put upon anew trial, how they will demean themselves; as to the lawful or unlawful use of the Law, or life thereof, in their restored nature. The obedient surrender thereof, by death, in sacrifice to God, under the Gospel-Cross, or crucifying work of Christs Gospel-spirit, in order to receive the life thereof, this is the right and lawful use of it, for their everlasting salvation. A wilfull detaining it, through inordinate love to it, and fixed enmity to the Cross and Gospel-spirit of Christ, is the unlawful use of it, to their everlasting damnation. For, this is a sinning after the similitude of *Adam's* transgression, which done again by men, in their own persons (after universall experience of the dreadful consequents of the first sin, and all warnings, since, given, to prevent the like) layes them, for ever, under wrath, as trees twice dead, once, in and with the first *Adam*, and then again, after restored by the second, into the life of the first. The common salvation, delivering from filth of flesh, or of the corrupt spirit of nature, is in order to a yet greater mercy, as the crowning benefit of Christs death, our receiving the gospel or new-covenant life. This onely secures from returning to filth of flesh, and cleanses also from all filth of spirit, or enmity to the power of godliness, in the spirit of grace, that is found under all the form of godliness and righteousness of man, in his spirit of nature, with its restored life of the Law. They that by gospel-light, receive the knowledge of the truth (or sight of Christs gospel-life, that is everlasting righteousness and truth) and then wilfully sin against it, hate, and reject it, they do for ever exclude themselves from all benefit of his sacrifice, and fall irrecoverably under his fiery indignation; *Heb. 10. 26, 27*. But it is the good will of God, and acceptable in his sight, that by partaking of the common salvation, in the restored righteous first-covenant-life of the Law, which is but shadow, men may be brought to the knowledge of the truth, in the second.

Verf. 5. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.

The knowledge of the one true God, through the one Mediatour between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, is eternal life; *Jo: 17. 3*. To know the true God, by living in the spirit of his son, is eternal life; *1 Jo. 5. 20*. The whole world (all mankind, in their own nature, corrupt or righteous) lies in wickedness, filth of flesh or spirit, and so, under the power of the wicked one, the devil, exposed to all manner of deceipts. True spiritual Saints, only, are secured from his wiles, by the clear knowledge of the divine mind, in Christs creature-spirit of infallible truth, which reveals the whole mystery of God the Father and of Christ. God, in his single

single, uncompoundd divine essence, is one. The Mediatour is not of one; *Gal. 31* 20. He consists of two distinct natures or spirits, divine and creaturely; which fits him for his mediating office, between pure divinity and meer creaturality. Blessed Angels and highest spiritual Saints, are meer creatures, and never will be more. They will, in this sense, need the Mediatour to eternity, as by his creature-medium, capable to receive the vision and enjoyment of the infinite divinity. To acknowledge God most high, in his single divine essence, and the Mediatour, as the divine form and supreme creature-image of God, most intimately one with the divine Father, is a right owning of the one true God, and the one Mediatour between him and man. And this now, also, the man Christ Jesus is; as through the death of our changable nature, made under the Law, raised into the conjunctive divine and everlasting righteous creature-life of the Mediatour; and the actual opener thereof to men, under the gospel-dispensation, so as never revealed to any former generations under, or before the renewed dispensation of the Law, at *Sinai*, though savingly believed in, by spiritual Saints, in those former ages. Divine nature was from eternity. Creature-nature was set up by the divine, in personal union with it self, from everlasting, in the Mediatour. That which was possessed by the divine, in the beginning of his way (*Prov. 8. 22, 23.*) towards the creation of the World, was distinct from it, though in personal union with it. In the man Christ, as exalted into this divine and creature-life of the Mediatour, dwells the fulness of the Godhead, bodily. And the original creature-life, into which he is exalted, is the living word of God, that is called God (*1 Jo. 1.*) The perfect knower and declarer of the whole mind and counsel of God, about the salvation of his creatures. The man Christ, as exalted into the life thereof, is the declarer and performer of the divine will, the infallible Judge of all Angels and Men, and righteous recompencer of them, accordingly as found in compliance with, or final and incorrigible rebellion against the declared will of God. His all-searching eye pierces to the bottom-thought of all hearts, and will bring all into open and general view, to the unspeakable joy of spiritual Saints, and everlasting shame of incorrigible sinners; *Heb. 4. 12, 13.* The spirit of the branch, brought forth by the creature-root in the Mediatour, in a changable state of life, was the immediate root of all changable first-creation being and life. This was translated, by way of death and resurrection, into the unchangable life of its creature-root and divine father, from the foundation of the World. Hereby became he, of the first-born of all changable first-creation beings, the first-begotten from the dead; *Col. 1. 15, 18.* And this is, by himself, when the son of man on Earth, called the son of man, in Heaven; *Joh. 3. 13.* He that ascended, is the same person, that descended into the lower parts of the Earth, all inferior first-creation earthly nature and life, sum'd up in man. And he that descended, is the same that ascended, far above all heavens (*Eph. 4. 9, 10.*), to the completing his mediating person, in reference to angels and men, having suffered and done all, in both their natures (angelical, at first; and humane, at last) conducive and requisite for the instruction and true blessedness of both. Christ, while in flesh, prayed to his Father, *That having glorified him, in finishing all the work appointed*

pointed him to do or suffer therein, he would glorifie him, with the glory he had with him, before the world was; Joh. 17. 4. 5. The man Christ, thus exalted, into the divine and creature-glories of God the Mediatour, hath a Life, and so a Name above every name, of any meer creature, angel or man. The divine, and originally unchangable, and twice transformed changable creature-nature, angelical and humane, into the conjunctive divine and originally unchangable creature-life, do all make up one and the same person of the Mediatour, the wonderful he, that such strangely differing things are spoken of, in Scripture, as the highest wisdom of man can never unriddle. This is he, that in the full comprehensiveness of his mediating person, made the worlds, is Heir of all things, and Judge of all men and angels; Heb. 1. 2. Act. 17. 31. Joh. 5. 27.

Verf. 6. Who gave himself a Ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

Christ, as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the World, in his changable angelical nature, was ready at hand, on the first sin and fall, to bear up the pillars of the first world. He presented his obedience to that spiritual Law, man sinned against, together with his readines and willingness to repeat the same over again, in our nature, and so to pay the ransom for all men (removing the guilt, contracted by all, through the sin of the first) and redeem them out of the sore bondage, they were all cast into. So are they brought back into the first-covenant life or light of their nature, for a second trial in their own persons, as to their lawful use thereof, in sacrifice to God, in order to receive that more excellent life of everlasting righteousness, offered at first, in the tree of Life. If men satisfy themselves with Christs redemption-gift of that life of the Law (he crucified in his own person) as a state of true rest, they will never arrive at that second and crowning gift of Christ, that everlasting righteous new-creation-life, which he advanced our nature into, in his own person. Evil angels did first set up the changably righteous first-covenant-life of the Law, in their angelical nature, in unchangable enmity to God and his unchangable new-creature-life of the Gospel. And Adam, listening to their suggestion, ran into the like error, through a sinful dotage upon, and inordinate love to the fading first-covenant-life of his humane nature (figured to him in the Tree of good and evil, as having but such a goodness in it, as by the unlawful use thereof might be turned into evil) rejecting the second, presented to him, in the Tree of Life. Man, being inferiour to angels, in his first-covenant-life, though perfect in his kind, and not under such strong and clear spiritual-light, as they, and beguiled into the error, by their overreaching subtilty, was found capable of pardon; the fallen angels, not. They that say, Adam should have kept up, and established himself, in that righteous life of the Law, wherein created; and consequently that men when restored by Christ, into the free exercise of the said Life, again, are to keep there, as a state of everlasting Salvation, and true blessedness, they do teach direct rebellion against the Lord, and his new-covenant-law. They assure them, that if they do that, which indeed is a sinning after the similitude of Adams transgression,

they shall be saved. For, his presumptuous keeping up and exalting the fading life and righteousness he was possessed of, by the first-creation, against that, represented to him, in the Tree of Life, provoked God to take from him that he had. The unlawful keeping it up, in a preference to the second, was his sin. He fell by his sin, from a changable state of subjection to the second, into a state of enmity to it, and God took from him, the first, and left him capable both of recovering the first, and by the right use thereof, of attaining the second. But, God gave up angels to their wilful choice of the first, and suffers them to keep and make their best of it, as fixed in unchangable enmity to the second. All along this world, are they permitted to use all the wisdom, power, fading glory, and excellencies of their angelical nature, as fixed in unchangable enmity to God and his new-creature, Gospel-spirit of Grace. On this great mistake about the first *Adams* sin, and then as great, about the second *Adams* death, by which the ransom was paid for it, how is it possible one word should run right, as to what is a sinning after the similitude of the first *Adams* transgression, or a true conformity to the second *Adams* death? If the death of Christ be confined singly to the violent dissolution of his body (which he exposed himself to, from the *Jews*) not considering at all, the surrender and loss of the first-covenant righteous life of his natural spirit, as made under the Law, for the everlasting righteous life of his Gospel-spirit, how can Saints alive yet in the mortal body, be conformed to Christ, in his death and resurrection? as, *Rom. 6. 3,--5.* and *Col. 3. 1,--3.* Yea, what if the Gospel or new-creature spirit of everlasting righteousness, be utterly denied, or not considered and owned, which performed the death-work on Christs natural spirit, in the life of the Law, as it had on the angelical spirit of the Branch, from the foundation of the World? Let creature-nature in Christs person, before his taking flesh, be denied, and the death of our nature in him, when taken, confined to that of the body, only; what Gospel are we like to have, from such hands, or what aim at a Gospel-state? If no elder date of creature-nature, in Christ, be owned, then his taking flesh, what becomes of the unsearchable riches of his person, consisting in the fellowship of divine and creature-nature, from everlasting, and kept as a hidden mystery and secret, till opened by the man Christ (*Joh. 7. 39. Rom. 16. 25, 26.*) which *Paul* owns as the very matter and substance of his Gospel-Ministry? *Eph. 3. 8, 9.* The changable righteous life of the Law, which the first *Adam* kept up, against the everlasting righteous Gospel-life of the second; the second *Adam* crucified in his own person, having taken the nature of the first, in order to translate it into the said Gospel-life of the second. If the very Gospel-life and principle be exploded, and excluded out of what is pretended to be Gospel-doctrine, where are we? If when restored by Christ into the lost righteous life of the Law, we live not to our selves therein, but quit that with him, by a holy death, that we may live unto him that died for us, in the same Gospel spirit, our nature in his person does now live, then have we the whole fruit of Christs death, and benefit of the ransom, therein paid for all, by him, and testified in the due, or appointed time.

Verf. 7. *Whereunto I am ordained a Preacher, and an Apostle (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not) in faith and truth.*

Paul here asserts, that Gospel-life of truth, into which Christ raised our nature in himself, to be, what he was ordained by God, an Apostle and Preacher of. *I speak the truth in Christ*, sayes he, *and lye not*. I speak not in the fading light of the first-covenant, but infallible spirit of the second. This will never assert the life of the Law to be a state of everlasting salvation, nor that it self is the divine spirit, but that infallible and everlasting righteous creature-spirit, that in Christ, and all true saints, is found in unchangable harmony with, and obedience to the divine. This spirit was the infallible giver, and is the only infallible interpreter of the Scripture. It will call all things by their right names; never give the new name of the truly spiritual man, to the natural, in the highest restorations thereof. Thus was *Paul* a teacher of the Gentiles, in faith and truth, to beget and build them up in the life of the faith of the son of God, that is everlasting righteousness and truth.

Verf. 8. *I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting (or disputation.)*

This does *Paul* will and command, in the authority of the spirit of Christ, in which ordained an apostle, and preacher of the Gospel to the Gentiles. Spiritual Saints only can thus rightly pray, in the spirit of Christ, which as 'tis the spirit of all true Prophecy or interpreting the Scriptures to men, So of all right prayer to God, for themselves and others. This spirit in saints is the infallible Seer, declarer and doer of the whole counsell of God, and right asker in prayer, of what is according to the divine mind and will of God. True Saints, in this spirit, lift up Holy hands to God, without any wrath or enmity to, any doubting of, questioning or disputing the truths or things, they speak of, or pray for. In the strong and cleer exercise of their spiritual mind, they admit not the mixtures of their naturall or fleshly, that is full, both of wrath, doubtings and disputes, against the spirit of Christ in them, and all the things, words, prayers, or concerns thereof. *Paul* therefore, immediatly, on his Gospel-conversion (from the first-covenant-life of the Law, in his renewed nature, to the second covenant life of the Gospel, in the new creature spirit of grace; from the life of his holy flesh, to the life of God's holy spirit,) would no longer confer with flesh and blood, the natural, fleshly mind in himself or others, in preaching Gospel to men, or putting up his prayers to God. The natural spirit, in its own way and course, is a wrathful, doubting, disputing, quarrelsome, contradicting blasphemous, against the Gospel-spirit, in the saint himself. It is in a union of mind with world and devil. *Paul*, after Gospel-conversion, found it (*Rom. 7. 23*) a law of sin in his members, warring against his spirituall mind; in a flat contrariety thereunto; *Gal. 5. 17*. Thus then, are men, or the spiritual man in every true saint, to do; pray, in the single power of Christs holy
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spirit, not admitting their doubting, wrathfull, contrary, natural or carnal mind, to have any thing to do, in their prayers.

Verf. 9. *In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shame-fac'dness and sobriety : not with plaited hair, gold, pearls, or costly array ;*

Verf. 10. *But (which becommeth women professing godliness) with good works.*

These women, not denying a literal, must be allowed a mystical meaning, also. The natural man of the saint, in the uncrucified, untransformed life, motion, and way of its own mind and will, is, in scripture, signified by the woman, from the changable and weak nature thereof. These mystical women, in saints, must adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shame-fac'dness and sobriety, not brodered hair, gold, pearls, or costly array. Here's an affirmative and a negative part in this advice to the woman or natural man, in saints, shewing what must, and what must not be found about them. Peter ioyns his advice with Paul, in this mystical sence of both their words ; 1 Pet. 3. 1, --4. *Wives, be in subjection to your own Husbands ; and your adorning, let it not be that outward, of plaited hair, gold, or apparel : but the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible ; the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God, of great price.* The wives, Peter speaks of, are the same with the women mentioned by Paul, the natural man in every true saint, that's to be subject to the spiritual, whose mind and will ought to be obeyed and done by it. The literal womans duty to her husband, is recorded, as a type of this mystery and truth ; 1 Pet. 3. 5, 6. *Thus, in old time, holy women adorned themselves, in modest apparel, not costly array, being in subjection to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord.* This obedience and subjection, in the literal type, must, in the mystical truth of it, be found in the natural to the spiritual man of the Saint, and therein, to Christ, as Lord, Ruler and Husband to the whole Saint. The costly array, forbidden his natural man, are the beautifying ornaments thereof, in the fruitful exercise of a restored first-covenant life, rendring him comly through that sort of comeliness, by the Lord himself, afresh, put upon him. All, God does for men, in this kind, he calls their own comeliness or beauty, charging them that trust therein, with whoredom, and a murderous mind of enmity against him, as (by such doating on that fading glory of their own renewed and adorned nature, that's but a perishing vanity) found in a despightful hatred to his spirit of grace, and never fading life and glory thereof, which by the obedient surrender and loss of the first, they are offered the possession of, by a new creation. Thus do men come, after all fair shews in the flesh, or restored life and glory of their own nature, to be deak with, as mystical and most criminal adulterers and murderers. Ezek. 16. 14, 15, and verf. 38. *Man lives to himself, and brings forth fruit to himself only, in the most fruitful exercise of the restored first-covenant-life of the Law, in his own nature ; not unto God, till possessed of,*
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and walking in the fruitful exercise of his new-covenant-life, in the spirit of the Gospel; *Hof. 10. 1. Rom. 6. 4.* God delights only in such worship and obedience as is performed in spirit and truth; in his Gospel-spirit, that is everlasting righteousness and truth. The spirit of nature, with its life of the Law, is but Letter, figure and shadow, in all the life, glory, wisdom and righteousness thereof; shadow of the unchangable life, glory, wisdom and righteousness of God, in his Gospel-spirit, the heavenly creature-image of his infinite divinity. God gives man all the fading life and Glory of his own nature, which he calls mans own, in distinction from what he calls his own, in that heavenly creature-image of himself, set up by him, in personal union with his divinity, from everlasting, *Prov. 8. 22, 23.* This, that was first set up in the Creatour, is last in the creature. First that which is natural, was set up in Angel and Man, and after, that which is spiritual. God says of this spiritual, everlasting righteous creature-life, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will wish my own?* *Mat. 20. 15.* All that finally refuse to surrender all that is their own, in the first creation, for Gods own, in the second, perish everlastingly. All that obediently part with the former, for the latter, are everlastingly saved. Never was there any other creature-spirit, name or life, in which any man or Angel could be saved, but what God calls his own, in Christ and all true spiritual saints. If mans Soul, in the fading life and glory of its restored first-creation state, loath and hate Gods soul, his Gospel, new-creature spirit of grace; that spirit or soul of God will loath mans, for ever. The mystical woman then, (the natural spirit of man, at best,) must put off all its ornaments and goodly dres, in the most fruitful exercise of its own restored first-covenant righteous life. Life and all, must go, that God may know what to do with us, by bestowing upon us, the everlasting life and Glory of the second. This was typed, in that speech of *Moses*, from God, to the *Israelites*, which they obeyed; *Exod. 33. 5, 6.* If, with *Laodicea*, men adorn and keep up themselves, in the fading life, mystical riches, glory and ornament of their own nature, for salvation (resting confident in their holy flesh, so as to reckon, they need not any thing that is to be had in Gods holy spirit) they are miserable, wretched, poor, blind, and naked, having nothing of durable, everlasting life, riches or cloathing, about them, when they reckon they have all; and are found despising as nothing, that which is all. The Gospel-spirit of the Cross, comes to seize, and offer up in sacrifice to God, all the fading good things in nature, that they rest in, for salvation, in order to give them its own life, in which alone they can be saved. The enmity that lies hid under all the green grass, or fair shews in the flesh, to Gods holy spirit, that comes to mar that holy flesh, is unpardonable, when unchangable. By wilful refusal to part with whats but changably good, in their own nature, figuratively signified by gold, pearls, brodered hair, and costly apparel, are men found enemies to the Gospel-spirit and Cross of Christ, and render themselves incapable of his durable life, ornaments and glory. Come we then, to the affirmative part of this joynt advice of *Peter* and *Paul*, in the true mystical reach and significancy thereof, which is, that the natural man, in every Saint, be adorned with a meek and quiet spirit; the same, with what

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Paul means by modest apparel, shamefastness and sobriety, & with such good works as are performable only, in the spirit and power of Godliness. Here is a joyned description of the right posture, garb and demeanour of the natural man in the saint, as sensible of enmity to its spiritual Lord and Husband, in all the riches, wisdom, righteousness, beauty, glory and ornament thereof. *Paul* found himself, in all that life, glory and ornament, a Persecutor of his true Lord, in his spiritual subjects, and verily thought he did God service, therein. But presently, on the heavenly appearance and call of his Lord, did he put off his ornaments, quit the fading glory, righteousness, and wisdom of his natural man, with all the reasonings and words thereof. He conferred not with flesh and blood, in himself or others, as to what he should do, in obedience to his spiritual Lord. Yea, he gladly received the sentence of death within him, as to the most blameless righteous-life of his natural spirit, in which, by Gospel-light, he finds he had been guilty of spiritual uncleanness and murder. He was presently found, on this account, in the meek, quiet, broken frame of his natural spirit, willing to have the sentence of death speedily executed upon it, as the only way of delivering him from that state of life, which now he finds to be a body of sin and death. Thus was his natural man brought into a right frame of obedience to the spiritual Lord and Husband thereof. And so came this mystical woman, in *Paul*, to be adorned, as a professor of true godliness, with a better sort of good-works, than ever he experienced in the form of godliness, the righteous life of his own nature. The good works, performable only in the new-creature-spirit, and power of godliness, are spiritual believers, most carefully to maintain, as truly good and profitable to salvation; *Tit.* 3. 8. This sort of good works, (which belong not, at all, to the covenant of works, but are performable only in the spirit of Grace) were ingredients into *Abrahams* justification before God; *Jam.* 2. 21,--24. Not the deeds of the Law, or works performable by him, in the first-covenant righteous life of his natural spirit; *Rom.* 4. 2,--5. The good works, wrought in the Gospel-spirit of grace, are as much more excellent than what are done in the natural first covenant-spirit and life of the Law, as the Gospel-spirit of God, than the Law-spirit of man. The fruits differ as much as the roots or principles, whence they flow. When the spirit of Christ enters a man, as ruling principle of life and action, the mystical woman, or spirit of man, is to lay aside her fading crown, scepter and government, and become wholly subject to this new ruler. The natural spirit, with its first-covenant-life, as not found in rebellion against the second, was the mystical *Isaac*, *Abraham* offered up, in his own person; who once prayed, *Oh that Ishmael might live in thy sight!* *Ishmael* was a type of the first-covenant-spirit, as found in enmity to the second; *Gal.* 4. 29. That prayer of *Abraham* then, may seem to import a secret love in him, to his own nature, in the first-covenant-life of the Law, as the state in which he desired to remain, and hoped to inherit the kingdom of God. But true godliness, with the good works thereof, can never be found in this mystical woman, the natural spirit of the saint, but by a right obedient parting with her own life, name, ornament and riches. For then she receives the spiritual life and riches of her true Lord and Husband, comes to bear his

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Name, and wear such new apparel, or change of raiment, as he will put upon her, which will never wax old or fail her, as was typed by the *Israelites Clothes and Shoes*, that waxed not old, in forty years, upon them; *Deut. 29. 5.* When the natural mind in saints, is transformed by death, out of its contrariety to, into harmony with the spiritual, their prayers are no longer hindered by the contrary-mindedness of the fleshly to the spiritual; *1 Pet. 3. 7. Gal. 5. 17.* The natural mind, so far as uncrucified, is an infidel, as to all Gospel things or truths, and so, an unequal yoke-fellow for the spiritual, in saints, *2 Cor. 6. 14, 15.* But when changed, and translated by a holy death, into the life of the spiritual, the whole man of the Saint, becomes a Temple of the living God; *vers. 16.* That this truth and mystery is figured by the literal husband and wife, *Paul* declares, *Eph. 5.* Where speaking of the duty of the literal wife to her husband, as head; in the winding up, he shews his principal intendment, all along, mystical, relating to Christ and his Church; *vers. 32.* The natural spirit in the Saint, quitting its own name and life, to live in the spirit and will of Christ, and bear his new-name, does live in the power of godliness, and will adorn its profession with the most excellent sort of good-works.

Verf. 11. Let the women learn in silence, with all subjection.

Here's also a literal and mystical sence. But the great weight lies in the mystical. The former is obvious; the true interpretation thereof will discover the latter, which is the duty of the natural spirit in man or woman, to the spiritual mind of Christ, formed in either, and so, to Christ in his Gospel-spirit of everlasting righteousness, the appointed spiritual husband to both. This great truth, held forth in the Type, should make such women as are also true saints, more careful than any, to perform this duty, in the letter, so as exactly to answer the duty of their literal marriage-relation, and more careful yet, to perform the mystical truth figured therein, by living in the will and spirit of Christ, their true Lord and Husband, in a holy silence and subjection in all things, to him.

Verf. 12. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man; (or the authority of the man) but to be in silence.

These words have also their truth in the letter: but the mystical truth, is the principal intendment of them. The natural spirit in the saint is not to teach her mystical, husband, the spirit of Christ; which she does presumptuously undertake, when in her inlightened understanding, she contends against the mind of Christ, convincingly discovered to her. She strives by the words of her own Wisdom, for the doing of her own will, in a known contrariety to the will of Christ, and words of his wisdom. So, she usurps the authority of the man. The female or natural spirit of Christ, did not thus: spake not its own words, nor did its own will, in the spoules righteous life of the Law: But, denied both, to speake the words, and do the will of God, in his Gospel-spirit of everlasting truth and righteousness. Where

the wisdom of man is teacher, the will of man is done. In this usurping the place of Christs Gospel-spirit, all his words are rejected and decried. Thus man joynes with the evil Angels, in the changable, female, fallible spirit of nature, against God and his infallible, manly new-creature-spirit of grace. They jointly set up that accursed other Gospel, Satan at first preached to Eve; Ye shall not die at all; Here is everlasting life, in the righteousness and Glory of your own nature. And this, the living word of God Proclaimes to be but a fading flower, in both. But though hand joyn in hand, evil men with evil angels, in this project, they shall not pass unpunished. Let their first-creation Mountain be never so strong, it will be dashed in pieces, and fired, by the ineluctable Power and unquenchable wrath of him that is infinitely above them. This false Gospel of man and Satan, (crying peace with God, where there is nothing but enmity to God, and assuring their followers, they will confirm or make good their words, *Ezek. 13.*) the true Gospel-spirit of Christ has declared, will have such generall reception with professors, in these last times, that there will be little or no hearing at all, for one right word of Christs everlasting Gospel life. The Woman, or naturall spirit, in evil men and Angels, thus presumptuously setting up her own wisdom and will, against the transcendently superiour will and Wisdom of the known Gospel-spirit of Christ, is the very mysticall *Babylon, the Mother of harlots and Abominations of the Earth.* The vast numbers of Angels and men, engaged in this Babylonish spirit, must, in conclusion, all fall together, under the final triumphs of divine justice. This Woman, in Saints themselves, must keep silence, in Gospel-Churches. For it is not permitted her to speake. *1 Cor. 14. 34.* By death, and the utter abolition of all the life and motion of her own will and understanding, can this Woman in the Saint, be brought to a perfect and absolute silence, and so, quickened up, into a newness of life, in everlasting harmony of mind and will, with her spiritual Lord and husband. So only can she be found in a universall obedience to him, in all things. If the Wisdom of man be admitted speaker in the Gospel Church, it will call mans natural things, (the fading glory, wisdom, righteousness and life of man, by the same names, the wisdom of God in the spiritual Saint calls the things of God) spiritual and heavenly; to the utter exclusion of such things as truly are so, which makes unutterable confusion, and vain jangling, to worse then no purpose. In sum, the spirit of Christ, in himself and Gospel-Saints, is to be acknowledged the only teacher in his Gospel Church. And the spirit of man, ought in silence, to learn obedience to the mind and will thereof. But, in stead of this silence, who else, in a manner, but this mystical woman, is found to be the only owned speaker and teacher in the pretended Gospel-Churches of Christ?

Verf. 13. For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

Verf. 14. And Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression.

The true Adam, here meant, is the new-creature-spirit of Christ, that neither in him;

himself or saints, can ever sin or be deceived; 1 *Joh.* 3. 9. The fleshly mind that remains long in the saint (after the seed of spiritual Life is quickened up into the birth of the man-child, in him) does nothing else but sin, till fully run down to death, crucified and extinguished in all the life and motion of it. So the whole person of the saint, is not without sin (1 *Joh.* 1. 8.) till this flesh, warring against the spirit of Christ in him (*Gal.* 5. 17.) this body of sin and death, (which we find *Paul* complaining of, long after a Gospel-saint (*Rom.* 7. 24.) be wholly slain and abolished, which may seem seldom, if ever, so to be, till the death of the body; *Phil.* 3. 12. No absolute perfection in any kind, while in this life. No complete being at home with the Lord, while pilgrimaging in the body. This made *Paul* desire to be dissolved. Here then is signified the precedency of the new-covenant-spirit, to the first, in saying, *Adam* was first formed, then *Eve*. Christ, in his new-covenant Gospel-spirit of everlasting righteousness, was set up, by the immediate workmanship of the infinite divinity, from everlasting. This spirit of the true *Adam*, which was the hand, by which, the Angels, *Adam*, *Eve*, and all things were created, was not deceived. But the Woman, or natural spirit, at its best, in *Angel*, *Adam*, and *Eve*, was deceived, and found in the transgression. These words can only be taken in this mystical sense. For the literal *Adam*, as well as *Eve*, was deceived, and found in the transgression. *In him, all died*; 1 *Cor.* 15. 22. *By his first offence, death reigned over all, and judgment came upon all men, to condemnation*; *Rom.* 5. 17, 18. The only relief of all men (fallen, in and with the first) is to be found in this *Adam*, that could never be deceived. When the lost life of the first, is restored and set up afresh in men, by the second, besides some dreggy remains of the corrupt nature, 'tis of a tainted blood, tinctur'd with a traitorous, heady, high-minded temper, in enmity to God, and the spirit of the second *Adam*. This enmity is no ways extinguishable, but by the death of this woman, the natural spirit in the highest restored life of the Law. Nothing short of such death can bring her into a total silence and subjection to her spiritual Lord and Husband. This death leaves not the least power in her own will, to sin against God's or destroy her self. This is farther signified,

Verf. 15. *Notwithstanding she shall be saved in child-bearing* (or, by the generation of Sons, as the Original and Arabick) *if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with sobriety* (Syr. chastity.)

The mystical woman, or natural spirit of the saint, in the restored righteous life thereof, inheriting a state of enmity and rebellion against God, by the first sin (as was evident in *Paul*) is no way curable, but by child-bearing; such child-bearing, as brings certain death to her. Bodily death sometimes happens in literal child-bearing: in mystical, alwayes the woman dies, in order to bring forth the new-creation-man-child. Christ uses literal child-bearing to signify this mystical-truth; *Joh.* 16. 20, 21. A woman in travel, hath sorrow, but when delivered, remembers no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. 'Tis all,

alwayes a man-child, a son, that's born in the saint, by the kindly death of his natural spirit, which is the only way by which that mystical woman can be saved. Christ, known after the flesh, in the restored righteous life of the Law, is a fleshly, first-covenant-bridegroom, as he was to his disciples, when personally in flesh with them, upon earth. And on his with-drawing from, and leaving such first-covenant-saints, they wither, for want of his fructifying husbandly influences upon them; there, which exposes them to the same sorrow, his personal departure out of the flesh, exposed his disciples, to. In this case, are saints ready to think, the Lord has utterly forsaken them, and that they shall never hear more of him: Nor indeed shall, in that first-covenant life or comforts thereof, but as a better comforter, in the second, as to his disciples, *Acts 2*. Now, in order to the birth of the spiritual man-child, the woman, or natural spirit expires and dies away, under the work of the Cross, so as to cease, for ever, from the activity, life and motion of her own will. And so comes she to be quickened up, into the spiritual life of her child, which becomes also, her mystical Lord, Head and Ruler, in the same person. And so is the whole person of the saint, brought under the spiritual government, and headship of Christ. In this mystical child-bearing, is the woman to continue in faith, love and holiness, with sobriety, or chastity. The faith here meant, is a faith in Christ's spiritual life, which sets before her, the same kind of joy, that made the natural man in Christ himself, willing to endure the Cross, despising the shame of the marr'd visage and state thereof. This faith must be continued in, and found trial-proof, by holding out, under the utmost pangs of death to the natural spirit, as to its first-covenant-life and fruitfulness. *Paul*, in the midst of his sufferings, had that joy set before him, which made him, not to reckon all the sufferings of the present time, worthy to be compared with the glory of that spiritual life, that follows; *Rom. 8. 18*. Christ, in that spiritual life, into which he rais'd our nature, in himself, out of the death of the pure natural state thereof, is the Object of faith to all spiritual saints. Our natural spirit or man, at best, can only by a conformity to his death therein, be raised into, and possessed of the same spiritual life, that is absolute salvation to us. By continuing stedfast in our spiritual faith, we shall also continue in love and obedience to Christ in his spiritual life. And so shall we pass quietly, through all the death-pangs of our natural spirits, with holiness and sobriety, or chastity to Christ, not looking back to the gratifying contentments thereof, or love to any thing in the first-creation, that's enmity to Christ, and spiritual adultery. *1st. 4. 4.*

C H A P. III.

Verf. 1. *This is a true saying, if any man desire the office of a Bishop, or Overseer, (Syr. Presbyter or Elder) he desireth a good work.*

TH E word, *Bishop or Overseer*, here, is appropriated to such as take care of the Church of God, spiritual saints. He that desires this Office, as meetly qualified to performe it, and is found diligent in the performance of it, desires a high dignity, and does a good work. Such are to take heed to themselves, and flock of Christ or Church of God, over which the Holy Ghost hath made them Overseers, and feed them, as *Paul* admonishes the Elders of the Church at *Ephesus*; *Act. 20. 28.* He declares to them, how he had discharged his part, in this good work, keeping himself clear from the blood of all, by declaring to them, all the counsel of God; *Verf. 26, 27.* Such Gospel-doctrine, as the words of Gods wisdom amount unto, are true Bishops to feed the Church of God, with, for the edifying, nourishing, strengthening and building them up in their spiritual, Gospel-life. That which qualifies to be such overseers of spiritual saints, is their being eminent-seers of God, more experienced, strong and clear, in the spiritual Gospel-light and life of Christ, and so, able to dispence the fuller and clearer knowledge of Christ, to saints of inferior attainments, therein. The faithful performance of this good work, is the most acceptable service to Christ, and greatest good, any can do, to his fellow-creatures, or himself. Prophets, under the Law, were put into this Office, by the same spirit of Christ, as Elders, Apostles and Fathers, under the Gospel. Nothing fits any to be the Lords watchman over saints, but a receiving the word from the Lords own mouth; *Ezek. 3. 17.* If he fail'd in the discharge of his Office, the guilt of their blood that perished, would lye upon him. If he faithfully discharged it, he was free from their blood, with *Paul*, though they perished; *verf. 18, -21.* Two sorts of persons are to be warned by spiritual watch-men (besides the feeding of spiritual saints) the righteous and the wicked; such, as in the corrupt spirit of Nature, and enormous lusts and practices thereof, are enemies of all righteousness, Gods and man's, too; and such as in the form of godliness, and restored righteousness of man, are found enemies to the power of godliness and righteousness of God, in his Gospel-spirit of grace. Of these two sorts of men, the first-covenant righteous, in their restored spirit of nature, have, all along, been found the fiercest opposers of the testimony and warning, given by spiritual watch-men. The corrupt, heathen party, living at random, without hope or God in the world, have nothing to lose. The righteous party of men, rich, full, wise, strong, and honourable in Christ, by the knowledge of him, after the flesh, and fruitful exercise of the first-covenant righteous life of the Law (purchased for them, and afresh set up in them,

by the redeemer) these wax confident and hopeful, that heaven is their own. And they want not, for such false Teachers, as will confirm them therein. The true spiritual watchmans testimony, strikes at all this, root and branch, life and hope, riches, wisdom, righteousness and glory, as a fading flower, a perishing nothing ; and availing nothing at all, as to eternal-life and true blessedness. This doctrine layes the Axe to the root of all humane interest. The righteous, first-covenant saint, then, with his holy flesh, lies in the face of this doctrine of Gods holy spirit, in true saints, that strikes at the root, and raises the very foundation of all their hopes. Hence, hath this sort of men, a first-covenant people of God, been found, briars, thorns and scorpions, to true spiritual watch-men (*Ezek. 2. 6.*) Serpents, and a generation of Vipers ; *Mat. 23. 33.* These crucified Christ, killed their own Prophets, persecuted the Apostles, please not God, and are contrary to all men, common sinners, and spiritual saints, *1 Thess. 2. 15.* The good works, and high office of a true Church Bishop, is to teach, open, and dispence these great concerning things and truths, to their fellow mortals, as Stewards of the mysteries of Christ, and Overseers of his Church.

Verf. 2. A Bishop then, must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach.

Verf. 3. Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, but patient, not a brawler, nor covetous.

Here are the charactering qualifications of a Gospel-Bishop, both affirmative and negative ; what he must, and must not be. He must be blameless, the husband of one wife, &c. Beside the literal meaning of these words, obvious to all, a mystical or spiritual sense must be enquired into, as the important intent of the Holy Ghost, therein. His being the Husband of one wife, imports the true subjection, and orderly comportment, the spiritual man in this Bishop, is to bring his natural, into, as the chaste spouse thereof, that so his whole person may be found in a universal obedience to Christ. This is the sobriety and good behaviour, the natural man of the Bishop must be found in ; as transformed into a harmony with the spiritual. And so is his spiritual man to be given to hospitality ; as apt to teach, and perform his trust, in a liberal and bountiful dispensing the whole mystical treasure of Christs person, and whole will and counsel of God, to others. He is to bring forth things new and old, relating to first or second covenant, and evidence them in their proper differences and distinctions, teaching the lawful use of the old, in subjection to the new, and warning men, not to reject or oppose the new, by the unlawful use of the old. He must declare the first-covenant-life of the Law, in mans restored naturals (with all the things, wisdom, glory, righteousness, riches, works, fruits and performances thereof) to be but a vanishing shadow, a fading flower. This is to be done with all perspicuity, plainness, and spiritual demonstration, to undeceive and fetch them out of mans, and satans other Gospel, and all false delusive rests,

rests, short of the grace and glory of God. And then is he to declare the everlasting righteous nature of the second-covenant-life, and all the things and fruits thereof. By such teaching, his hearers have fair aim given them where they are, and where they should be, together with their danger in the former, and security in the latter. The true Bishop, thus skill'd and instructed himself, as to things new and old, is able to instruct others, to the kingdom of God. Thus, the whole mystery of Godliness, in the second-covenant spirit, and Satans whole mystery of iniquity (by encouraging men to rest in and keep up the first, against the second) fly open together and at once. All Satans wiles, depths, and methods of delusion, are thus brought into open view. *Paul*, in the highest light, wisdom, and righteousness of man, in the first-covenant-life of the Law, was ignorant of Satans wiles, against the Gospel, and so, engaged on his side, against Christ. When by Gospel-light, he saw Satans wiles, he faced about, and became a signal discoverer of them. Then he could declare the whole counsel of God, and discover the whole counsel of the devil. The depths of Satan cannot be hid from those that see the deep things of God. All his disguises, by spiritualizing earthly nature, in himself or Apostles, into a counterfeit resemblance of the spiritual life of Christ, in himself or saints, cannot deceive these Eagle-eyed Evangelists, these true Gospel-Bishops. And so much, at present, as to the affirmative, qualifications of a true Gospel-Bishop. The negative are, *Not given to wine, &c.*

The first-covenant-life, with all the things, fruits and contentments thereof, is the mystical wine, that in the immoderate use thereof, has more dangerous effects than the literal. This did so intoxicate angel and man, at first, that they loathed the mystical wine of Christ's new-covenant kingdom-spirit and life of everlasting righteousness, with all the things thereof. And when man is again filled with the mystical wine of a first-covenant-life; made rich and full, there, Satan tempts him again, to such an excessive love thereto, and delight therein, as causes a mystical drunkenness, and spiritual madness, by which man is so puffed up in the riches, beauty and fading glory of his own restored nature, in the first-covenant life of the Law, that he despises (strives and contends against) Christ himself, in his Gospel-spirit of everlasting-righteousness, that is the Vine of the Kingdom. Man's inordinate love to, and use of this first-creation wine, will make him a striker of all the true lovers of the second; breathing out threatnings and slaughters, in a fierce persecuting zeal for the life of the Law, against the everlasting Gospel-life of Christ, in himself and saints. *Phylargury*, or a covetous mind after mans own mystical silver, in the life of the Law, or righteousness, fruits and riches of his own nature therein, makes him despise Christs new-creation gold, or heavenly treasures of spiritual-life. This turns all the changeably good things, or *Laodicean* treasures of a first-covenant-life, into filthy lace, which the Gospel-Bishop must not be greedy of, or covet after. The Cross of Christ is the only cure of all this evil. The crucifying of the natural man of the saint (which is the flesh, that opposes the spiritual, and spirit of Christ) extinguishes all unlawful love to the most charming desires, visible or invisible, in the whole first-creation world of vanities, that Satan

is permitted to make his best of, against the Gospel-spirit of Christ, and God. The true Bishop must then be patient, in a quiet submission to the full death-work of the Cross, or Gospel-spirit, on his unruly natural man, which will fully at length, crucify him to all false, mistaken objects of his love. Paul was not only patient, but rejoiced under this progressive work of the Cross, till finished, by which the world was crucified to him, and he to it; *Gal. 6. 14.* And then will the natural man in the Gospel-bishop, or any spiritual-saint, be no brawler, or contentious wrangler or disputer against the Cross, and Gospel-spirit, or any of its doctrine, the words of its wisdom. The spirit of Christ does, by this means, become the undisturbed Lord and Ruler, in and over his whole man. And thus, in an eminent degree, must this Bishop be found.

Verf. 4. One that ruleth well his own House, having his Children in subjection; with all gravity.

Verf. 5. For if a man know not how to rule his own House, How shall he take care of the Church of God?

These words, with the former, have their literal sense. But the mystical, is the chief intendment of all. Here are summ'd up all the former qualifications, negative and affirmative, for this great and good work of a true Bishop. He must have the mystical house, his whole person, in a holy spiritual, new-creation order and rectitude, under the Government of Christ, his living Lord and Head. His natural man, in all the parts, powers, operations, desires, thoughts, fruits, or births thereof, must be found and kept in a peaceable subjection to, and harmony with his spiritual, without any light, wanton glances, or unchaste desires after first-creation vanities, the love of which is enmity to God, and adultery against Christ, the spiritual Lord and Husband to the whole saint; *Jam. 4. 4.* The whole person of the Bishop, must be thus well ruled, before he can be fit to rule, under Christ, over his Church. *Hezekiah*, under the Conduct of first-covenant-light and wisdom, had walked faithfully, in the fruitful exercise of his first-covenant-life, so thought himself truly acceptable to the Lord. But he wept sorely, when he came to find his great mistake therein. A sentence of death is pronounced upon him, in all that ruling light, life, obedience and fruitfulness, in order to set his house, heart, or spirit, in that new-creation rectitude and order (under a new ruler, and in a newness of life) in which alone he can become well-pleasing to God. He was sorely surprised with this amazing discovery (by a beam of new-light, from the spirit of Christ, darted into him) that all his walking before God in truth, and with a perfect heart, doing that which he thought good in Gods sight, as well as his own, was no such matter, but indeed, that he had been, all along, in a state and course of enmity to God, on which therefore death is pronounced; and so, on his natural spirit, therein.

And on this death, obediently submitted to, a newness of life is put into his spirit, figured

by the new life, given in an extraordinary way, to his body, out of a mortal sickness. *Esa. 8.* Paul, after all his good opinion of himself, in holy flesh, by the light of Christs holy spirit, is brought to see and call that whole state of life and righteousness (in which he had walked faithfully, and kept a good conscience) *a body of sin and death*, which he therefore prayed to be delivered from. He found, that in all his form of godliness, or righteousness of man, he had been practising direct enmity, against God, even when he verily thought he had done him service. As the case stands with man, since the fall, he is, in all the righteous life and action of his restored nature, in a secret combination against the spirit of Christ, and his rule therein, over him. Satan secretly inveigles men by their very righteousness and obedience, in the first-covenant, into a confederacy with him, against Christ, and the second. A considerable progress then, towards the death of the former, and proportionable growth up into the life and strength of the latter, rendering the whole person, or mystical house of the Saint in good order, all this is required in a true Gospel-Bishop, or Overseer and Feeder of the Church of God.

Verf. 6. Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnations of the devil.

Man, in the highest wisdom, light and righteousness of the first covenant, is a novice at Gospel things ; cannot receive, and how then, declare them ? Thousands of pretended Gospel-ministers, in but the life of the Law, are the unlikeliest hearers of true Gospel-preaching, to their advantage, in the whole world. They deny the principles and rase the very foundations of Gospel. And if the foundations be destroyed, or denied, what can be said to them, or done with them, in discourse ? They are perfectly unreasonable and untreatable, as to Gospel matters. This sort of novices, are surely unfit to feed Christs Gospel-flock, that contradict and blaspheme all that Gospel-doctrine, they should feed them with. Farther then, the novice, more properly here meant, that is not to be a Gospel-bishop, is not only such a one as has begun in the spirit, by receiving Gospel-light, but such a Neophyte as is but newly or lately planted into Christs Gospel-life, a babe, youngling or novice, therein. Such a one is unfit for this high service to Christ, in his Church. But as a littler Child, or novice in naturalls, may grow a wise, able, knowing man, as to the things of man ; So a spiritual novice, that is yet to be fed and taught, may grow so expert in the things of God, as to be a teacher and feeder of others. *Apollo*, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, instructed in the way of the Lord, and fervent in spirit, was yet but a novice, as to Gospel-matters. *Aquila* and *Priscilla* therefore, two of his hearers, expounded to him the way of God, more perfectly, *Act. 18. 24, 26.*

Lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

Pride and self-confident, self-exalting thoughts, are incident to the natural man
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of the saint himself, in the restored righteous life of the Law, by which, made knowing, wise, rich, strong, honourable, and beautifull, in his own nature. This self-exalting thought in the evil Angels (by doting upon and priding themselves in the first-covenant-life and Glory, Wisdom, and Righteousness, which they had in a superiority to man, in their angelical nature) grew to that extremitie, that they kept up that, in wilful disobedience against (in stead of obediently parting with it, to receive) the yet transcendently superior creature-life, clearly shew'd and offered to them by a new creation. And multitudes of men, renewed into the first covenant righteousness and glory of their own nature, do so dote upon that, and themselves therein, that they refuse the same more excellent life, the evil Angels did, when convincingly set before their eyes, by its own Gospel-light. And through such pride and presumption, do they fall into the same condemnation with devils. In the Glory and excellency of their first-creation life, turned into unchangeable enmity to God and the second, do the evil Angels proudly exalt themselves above the stars of God, new-creation Angels and Saints, yea Christ, and God himself; the infinite divinity, and the fountain new creature-spirit, or living word of God, that is also called God, *Jo. 1. 1.* They exalt themselves against all that is truly called God, or worshipped, *2 Thes. 2. 4.* But they shall be brought down to hell. *Es. 14. 12, - 15.* The *Luciferian-head*, in the supremam excellency of first creation-nature, with his evil Angels, and fixed first covenant party amongst men (in the life and righteousness of the Law, the glory of their humane nature) do arrogantly set up their worldly kingdom, against Gods, Christs, and the Saints of the most high, in unchangeable enmity to all, and absolute denial, and so exclusion (as much as in them lies) of Christs and his Saints spiritual Kingdom, as a meer fiction. All men, that he can keep within the compass of their own nature, corrupt or righteous, in unchangeable enmity to God and his Gospel spirit, are his loyal subjects. His permitted power herein, is so vast, and his skill to use it, so delusive and over-reaching, that, if it were possible, he would deceive the very Elect. He does deceive, even them, till wakened up into the light and life, to and in which, chosen. This was evident in *Paul's* own case. Yet these evil Angels, as subtle and powerful as they are, to deceive men, were the first mystical novices, that when initiated by highest gospel conviction-light, in the sight and knowledge of Christs Gospel-life, through priding themselves in their own nature, they exalted and fixed themselves in unchangeable enmity against it, to their irrecoverable ruine. And men, fixing in the restored first-covenant-life and glory of their own nature, in unchangeable enmity to the second, are of their Father the devil, a serpentine generation of Vipers, as Christ called the righteous *Scribes and Pharisees*. They were hypocrites, as desiring in that real righteousness of man, to pass for what they were not, true spiritual saints, and heirs of the kingdom of God. Yet these put in for it, and set up themselves as true feeders of the flock of Christ, that are in a spirit of perfect enmity, to all the things and truths, they are to feed upon.

Verf. 7. Moreover, he must have a good report of them which are without, lest he fall into reproach, and the snare of the devil.

Who are these without ? And what's the good report, must be had from them ? To the first. They without, are such as are not yet of Christ's spiritual flock, being destitute of any spiritual knowledge or experience of Christ, in his spiritual life. To the second. The good report, to be gain'd or deserved from these, must be, by their clost, fruitful walking with and towards God, in the Gospel-principle of everlasting righteousness. So will they not gratify and keep up, but oppose, put away, and crucify that flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof, which would expose them to reproach. This, are those that desire the good Office of a Gospel-Bishop, to be extraordinarily careful in. All spiritual Saints, ought to walk circumspectly ; not as fools, in their own spirit of darkness, bondage, and death, but Christ's spirit of infallible truth, everlasting life, liberty, and love ; *Ephes. 5. 15. Col. 4. 5, 6. Walk in wisdom towards them that are without, that ye may know how to answer every man.* Walk, think, and speak, as well as live, in the Gospel principle or spirit of Christ ; *Col. 2. 6 Gal. 5. 25.* This will win honour to the Gospel-principle, as the best director of mans steps. Their speech should be always with grace, such as flows from the spirit of grace, and true wisdom, which will be justified of her children, spiritual saints, and silence all objections from any, without ; *1 Pet. 2. 12. 15.* Those that walk with a right foot, according to the Gospel, bringing forth the fruits of their spiritual man, in the word and action of their natural, will deserve a good report from all, without, and glorify their Father which is in Heaven. So shall his Gospel-spirit evidence it self to be the best teacher and performer of all duty to God and man. On the other-hand, if Gospel-Saints, and specially, Bishops, fail in this point, as to a circumspect, steady walking, and conversing in their Gospel-principle, the fleshly part in them may run them into such enormities, as will expose them to just censure from the common light of reason, in all mankind. This, *David* and *Solomon* had the sad experience of, with many others, after eminent in spiritual saint-ship. The teaching spiritual saint, must be signally careful, herein, lest he fall into reproach, and the snare of the devil. For, if he give occasion to the enemies of the Lord, to blaspheme (*2 Sam. 12. 14.*) he falls into the snare of the devil, who will be sure to serve his designs, thereby. On any failings of their natural man, he will fix the reproach on their spiritual principle. If they be inticed out of their Gospel-way, they fall into his snares, and give occasion to such a smiting with the tongue, as brings contempt on their Gospel-testimony ; *Jer. 20. 10. and 18. 18.*

Verf. 8. Likewise must the Deacons be grave, not double-tongu'd, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre.

Here are also the negative and affirmative qualifications, for *Deacons*. The in-
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stitution;

situation, work and business of this office, was to supply the outward wants of the poor, belonging to the Church, by a just distribution to them, out of the common stock of the Church, *Act. 6. 1,-- 4*: These *Deacons* were to be of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost, and wisdom. They must be grave, or modest, chaste, holy, honest, as the word signifies. *Not double-tongu'd*. Man in the restor'd first-covenant-life and righteousness of the Law, is double-minded, and double-tongu'd, *unstable in all his ways*; *Jam. 1. 8*. In all his profession of love and service to Christ, in the spirit of the Law, he joyns with the devil, against the very Christ, the spirit of the Gospel. Thus did *Paul himself*, for a season. Man, in this case, labours to juggle out of the world, the Gospel-spirit, and all the right words thereof, as a meer heap of heretical blasphemies, that would destroy all religion, and discountenance righteousness, in a holy professing sort of Christians. The design of devil and man, in all this, is, to set up their own spirit of nature, with its life of the Law, in opposition to the everlasting righteous Gospel-spirit and life of Christ. Such professors flatter God with their mouths, and lye to him with their tongues. For their heart is not right with him; *Psal. 78. 36, 37*. They pretend the greatest service and obedience to God, in the spirit and life of the Law, and at the same time joyn with the devil, in breathing out threatnings and slaughter against the true Gospel-spirited disciples of Christ. A zeal and warmth for the former, while ignorant of the latter, is pardonable, as in *Paul*. But, when, against Gospel-light and conviction, such zeal is the fire of Hell, or spirit of the Devil, lodging them in unchangable enmity, to God. *David*, finding himself exposed to all sorts of evils, and backslidings, in the most righteous state of his own spirit, that is but a wavering, starting, unsteady thing, begs of God to give him his right, steady, constant spirit of everlasting righteousness, *Psal. 51. 10*. In this new-covenant spirit, man can never depart from God, nor will God, from him, *Jer. 32. 40*. The honesty of nature, at best, is not to be trusted to, in our selves or others. Man, in the highest degree of honour, as to the righteousness of his own nature, is a lie. If he trust to that, for salvation, he will find it so. He that is honest and clean, as to filth of flesh, to day, may return to his old sins, in the corrupt and unrighteous spirit of nature, to morrow. And if men of high degree, in the restored life, Glory and honour of their nature, be a lie; What must men of low degree, in the debased, polluted state of their nature, be? see. *Psal. 62. 9*. Put them both into the balance, and they'll be found altogether lighter than vanity. So, *Psal. 39. 5*. The gravity, required in the Deacon is effected by the needful sharp discipline of the Cross, on his natural spirit, which, at best, is fickle, unstable, and lighter than vanity it self, in the whole will, life, riches and delights thereof. The work of the Cross, on all these fading materials, brings the same into a true gravity, by thinking soberly and rightly of the state of vanity, and himself therein. The spirit of Christ, gives him quite another sight and opinion of that state and all the fading glory thereof, in the conceited excellency of which, he, before, was puffed up. What *Paul*, once thought himself, safe for salvation, in, he after found to be a state or body of sin and death, which if permitted to have finished his course, in, would have been his eternal

nine. The spirit of everlasting righteousness, by its crucifying work, rids the saint of his own frothy life of vanity, and sets up its durable life and substance in the room thereof, which renders him truly humble, grave, holy, sober, chaste, and obedient to Christ and God, in all things. *Not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy ure.* These words are spoken to, in the Bishop, *Vers. 3.* An inordinate, excessive and unlawful love to, and doting upon, the mystical wine, the fading life, fruits, righteousness, wisdom and glory of our restored nature (which are intended but as a present supply to the needy, naked, barren and polluted state, we were born in) is here prohibited. Otherwise, shall we despise and reject that durable riches, life, food and clothing, offered us in Christs Gospel-spirit of everlasting righteousness, in which alone we can be saved.

Vers. 9. Holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience.

True spiritual faith is a mystery, in the principle, operation, discerning, wisdom, objects, and all concerns thereof. The spiritual saint, as so, with all his things, is invincible to the bare natural understanding of angel or man. He is judged or discerned of no man; *1 Cor. 2. 14, 15* The most soaring, searching natural capacity is stark blindness and darkness itself, as to him and all his matters. They are quite out of the sphere of the natural activity, in angel or man. Their very understanding sits the dark vail, and partition wall, between them and all such things. This wall, broken down by the cross-work of the Gospel-spirit, and its own new intellect set up in the room thereof, a new scene and world of spiritual objects, things and truths, would appear, and grow familiar to them. While bidding, in the utmost stretch of their natural powers, at gospel-truths, they are under an utter impossibility of ever finding what they seek. They are ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of any spiritual, gospel-truth. As for the spiritual man, he is not seen by them, in his very seeing, or discerning principle. His understanding is not understood by them. So all is denied, all he sees, and the very Gospel-spirit or principle, in which he sees. What can any discourse then, between the dispenser of this world, the wrangling naturalist, and spiritual seer, amount unto? All the foundations of the latter, are pulled up, denied, and destroyed by the former. But, what is the compleat object of spiritual faith? The infinite divine nature, clothed with an everlasting righteous creature-nature, on purpose to let down himself, to meet creature-understanding and enjoyment. And, into this divine and creature-fellowship, in the Mediators person, is the man Christ exalted, to open the whole mystery. And so, in his whole mediating person, is the object of saints spiritual faith. The pure conscience, in which this mystery of faith must be held by saints, is the true Gospel good conscience, by a universal obedience to God, in all things, and faithful declaring his whole counsel, to men, whatever opposition, contention, and contradiction they meet with. For this, must they walk closely with God, and declare his mind to men, in the pure exercise of the Gospel-spirit and faith. Without a steady walking in the Gospel-principle, towards God and man.

this pure conscience cannot be had. These are the affirmative qualifications, that fit saints, for Christs service, in his Church.

Verf. 10. *And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a Deacon, being found blameless.*

Thus were they, in the first institution of them, in the Gospel-church. The Church did look out among them, seven men of honest report, full of the holy ghost and wisdom, importing, at least, an eminency in Gospel-light. And the apostles, as elders and fathers in Christ, confirmed the Churches nomination of them, as fitly qualified for this office; *Act. 6. 5, 6.*

Verf. 11. *Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.*

Verf. 12. *Let the Deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children, and their own houses, well.*

The literal sense of these words is obvious. The mystical has, in some measure been spoke to, in the Bishop. By gravity, sobriety and faithfulness in all things; are held forth the happy effects of the discipline of the Cross on the mystical woman, or natural man, in the saint, which brings it to a grave, chaste, sober temper, in obedience to the spiritual, and so to Christ. It subdues the will thereof, that would be gadding abroad, after first-creation vanities and false beloveds, and so brings her to live in the will of her spiritual Lord and Husband. And so is taken off from slander, contradicting and blaspheming the doctrine, words and discipline of her spiritual Lord, the usual practice of the natural spirit, in the single, uncrucified life and righteousness of the Law. The Jewes, therein, blasphemed and crucified Christ.

Verf. 13. *For they that have used the office of a Deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness, in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

The supplying the necessities of the poor, and specially, widows, in the Church; without respect of persons, or any partial considerations, was a using their office well, in a literal sense. But the high qualifications required in them, full of the holy ghost, &c. import a higher service than this, belonging to their place; the ministering spiritual things to the mystical poor in the Church, impoverished in their own spirit by the demolishing work of the Cross, and so, hungry after spiritual relief from Christ, which the flesh-soul in first-covenant-life and riches, loathes. They were to hand forward babes in Christ, towards a fitness for stronger meat, or more full discoveries of Christ, by the apostolical or teaching elders, that applied themselves wholly to prayer and the ministry of the word; *Act. 6. 4.* By using their office well, towards the literal and mystical poor in the Church, they purchased a good

good degree to themselves, and great boldness in speaking Gospel-truths. So at length, might become teaching-elders.

Verf. 14. These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee, shortly.

Verf. 15. But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thy self in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

Paul writes this Epistle to *Timothy*, as a present supply of what he would farther inform him in, when he sees him. Herein does he state to him the severall offices of rule in the Church of God, and qualifications for them; and so, how he ought to behave himself in that House or Church of the living God. This Church is the whole number of spiritual saints, *Christ* is head to. The spirit of the head is in every member, begetting the same mind and judgment in them all, in an everlasting union and communion with himself and one another. This Church of God is here also called the pillar and ground of the truth. When *Simon* acknowledged *Christ* in his everlasting righteous creature-life, son of the living God, the true rock on which he builds his Church, in allusion thereto, he calles *Simon*, *Peter*, or a rock, as owning this rocky foundation of the true Church, through partaking of that spirit which is the rock. On this, *Christ* calles him a rock, or stone. And so is every spiritual saint a *Peter*, a rock. All of them are lively stones, spirited, by the living corner-stone; built on that rock, that is disallowed of men, but chosen of God; *1 Pet. 2. 4. 5.* So, foundation and building, head and members, all is rock, against which the gates of hell, all the powers of darknes, shall never prevail; *Mat. 16. 16.-18.* Thus are saints with their head, the house of God, the pillar and ground of truth, every of them, in the new name and life of the rock, an immoveable pillar in that temple of God, the Gospel-spirit of *Christ* is the foundation of. *Paul* thus characters the true Church of God, to *Timothy*, that he may the better understand how to behave himself in and towards it, by observing the several growths of members in it, and accordingly satiating his instructions, for the forwarding and building them up, in the knowledg and experiences of *Christ*.

Verf. 16. And without controversie, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of Angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

Christ, in his wonderful and all comprehensive person, is the true and great mystery of godliness. The account here given, as to the creature-part of his person, discovers to us his twofold, first and second covenant life, signified by his being manifested in flesh, and justified in spirit. He was God manifested in flesh, or in the changable righteous life of our nature. And when he had finished the works, given him by the Father, to do therein, he sacrificed it, in that life of the Law, and raised it into his Gospel-life of everlasting righteousness, signified here, by justifi-

ed in the spirit. And so did he manifest his everlasting righteous creature-life, in fellowship with divine, which before was a hidden mystery. Thus is that creature-life that has immortality in it, brought to light, by the true preaching of the Gospel, which commenc'd on Christs ascending into it, in our nature, and opening all that before lay hid. True gospel-preachers declare Christ manifested in flesh, justified in spirit. Both these things, *Paul* received from Christ and declared to men; *1 Cor. 15. 3, 4.* *He died for our sins, and rose again,* according to the scriptures. God the Mediatour took our nature in the fleshly first-covenant-life thereof, as an earthly vail, not only upon his infinite divinity, but everlasting righteous creature-spirit, on purpose to rent and sling off the same by death, in order to raise and advance it into the life of his everlasting righteous creature-spirit, and so, personal union, with his divine, also. Thus, has the man Christ set open that spiritual life, offered the transforming sight of it, and is become, therein, a certain pledg of our everlasting justification and acceptance with God, by partaking of the same spiritual life, with our nature in his person. We can be finally justified, only in the same spirit, he is. So great weight is laid on the full confession of these two things, that a not rightly acknowledging the latter, is interpreted and understood by the holy Ghost to be a denial of the former; as making void the principal end of his being manifested in flesh. *Hereby, sayes John, know ye the spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God.* And every spirit that confesseth not this, is the spirit of antichrist. What a world of spiritual saints, born of God, if the bare general acknowledgment of Christs taking flesh, were all that is here meant? But he that denies that spiritual, Gospel-state of life, in which, only the man Christ, and consequently any other man, is, or can be absolutely justified and saved, denies also his being manifested in flesh. The advance of our nature in Christ, into personal union with the divinity (as that unchangable creature-life, into which exalted, was, from everlasting) is not the lot or portion of any man or Angel. This divine unction, is that oil of gladness, with which the man Christ is anointed, in a transcendent superiority to all his fellow-brethren of the spiritual unction, for ever. The man Christ has Gods divine nature and name in him, which is unspeakably more excellent, then any man or Angel ever can have. There is therefore no danger in worshipping the man Christ. God himself commands all his holy Angels to worship him; and all men to honour the son, even as they honour the father; *Joh. 5. 23. Heb. 1. 4-9.* Saints are admitted immediate personal union with their nature in Christ, that, in him, is in personal union with God most high. Himself prays, that they may be one with him, and he with them, in his everlasting righteous creature-life, as he with the father and the father with him, in the infinite divine nature and life; *Joh. 17. 21, 23.* Without all dispute, great is the mystery of godliness, wrought out, by the Mediators manifesting himself in our fleshly nature, and, by death, advancing it into his spiritual creature-nature, the most holy creature-state or place, the immediate house or suprem temple of the divinity, in personal union with the divine inhabitant. *Seen of Angels.* Christs being actually manifested in flesh, was first signally witnessed by Angels; *Luk. 2. 9,*

14. And so was his being justified in spirit; *Mat. 28. 6. He is not here, he is risen.* He has raised your nature in himself, into that everlasting righteous creature-life, in which, seen by Angels, as justified in spirit. And in that life only, can any be everlastingly justified. Secondly, Christ as thus justified in spirit, was preached to the *Gentiles*, as the sum of all Gospel truth. The mystery of godliness (set open and brought to light in and by the man Christ, so as not before known to the sons of men, since the world began) was revealed to his apostles, and prophets, by the spirit (*Eph. 3. 5.*) and by them preached to the *Gentiles*. The spiritual creature-life of Christ, was a land of distances, a state very far off, to spiritual saints, in former ages, yet seen and rejoiced in by their spiritual faith, as their salvation, *Joh. 8. 56.* Christ revealed to *Paul*, the unsearchable riches of his person, consisting in the fellowship of his infinite divine and everlasting righteous creature-spirit, which had, till then, lain hid in God, from everlasting; *Eph. 3. 2,--9.* The great end of Christs being manifested in flesh, was, by the death thereof, to ascend into, and open this mysterious fellowship of two natures in his person, from everlasting. By partaking of the one, are men and Angels capacitated for the everlasting light and enjoyment of the other, also. The true preaching of this mystery, is the right Gospel-preaching of Christ. This we find, in *Peters* testimony, presently after that first signal opening of the mystery, by the effusion of the Gospel-spirit, on the Apostles; *Act. 2. 22, 24.* and *vers. 32, 33.* All true Gospel-preachers and true Prophets or interpreters of Scripture, declare Christs being manifested in our fleshly nature, and quitting the changable first-covenant righteous life thereof, by death, and then raising our nature in himself, into that everlasting righteous new covenant life, in which, for ever, justified. The man Christ, thus by the right hand of God, exalted; and having received the promise of the Father, (or thing promised, even the holy ghost, or compleat life of his everlasting righteous creature-spirit) *hath shed forth this* *ayes Peter, which ye now see and hear.* Having received this promise of the Father, himself, he communicates it to them, also, as having rightly and obediently waited for it, according to his command, before his ascension; *Act. 1. 4.* So, *Act. 4. 10,--12.* By the name of *Jesus of Nazareth, whom ye crucified and God raised from the dead, does this man stand before you, whole.* And by the same new name of his, in his spiritual life, can any man ever stand or be found in perfect soundness, so as to be everlastingly justified in Gods sight, and saved, *Act. 3. 16.* *Peter*, in defence of that right power, and name, by which he had cured the impotent man, first, to the People (*Act. 3.*) and after, to the Council (*Act. 4.*) gives a full testimony to Christ, comprehending the sum of all Gospel-preaching. He declares him to be that *Jesus of Nazareth*, who was crucified in the changable first covenant life of the Law (in which he had been manifested) and raised, by the mighty power of God, into the everlasting righteous new covenant life of the Gospel, and divine also. So, is the very man Christ, as exalted into the full possession of divine and everlasting creature-life, the compleat and comprehensive mystery of Godliness, in himself, and opener thereof, to others. He that was manifested in flesh, by being justified in spirit, becomes the manifestor of his own divine and creature-spirits, and fellowship thereof, in

Personal union, from everlasting, so, as never before known, to blessed Angel or saint. Christ, on all these accounts, was Preached to the *Gentiles*, and believed on, in the world, as received up into glory. And in that exalted state, the man Christ Jesus, as possessed of divine and everlasting creature-life, Presents himself as the adequate object of spiritual faith, for the everlasting salvation of men.

C H A P. IV.

Verf. 1. Now the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.

SEE *Mat. 24. Luk. 21.* and other scriptures ; or, the spirit of Christ, in a signall and emphatical manner, declared to *Paul*, that in the latter times, &c. The spirit of nature in man, is of the same pallate with the spirit of the devil ; favoures only the shadowy, earthly things of man or Angel, in the first-creation, not the spiritual, eternal, substantial things of Christ and God, in the second ; *Mat. 16. 23.* Man, in his restored righteous nature, stands ready and willing to receive the doctrine of devils, that speakes smooth things to him, and propheties deceits : But, in a spirit of enmity to all right things, and denance to all the words of true spiritual seers, saying to them, *Prophecie not unto us, Es. 30. 10* When things go at this rate, that the Prophets Prophecie falsly, and the People love to have it so, what can be the end thereof, but destruction to both ? *Jer. 5. 31.* This is the wonderfull and horrible thing (*vers. 30.*) found in restored, righteous first-covenant-saints and professours in all ages, amongst Jew or Gentile, that the Gospel-spirit of Christ which is the fountain of living waters, with all its words and counsells, is utterly despised and rejected ; and the leaking vessel, or broken cistern of mans natural spirit, with its fading waters of a first-covenant-life, chosen and set up in, for salvation ; *Jer. 2. 13.* In all this practice, they reckon themselves true spiritual Jews or saints, but are the synagogue of satan ; *Rev. 3. 9.* The full and final vindication of Christs Gospel, and the true preachers thereof, is reserved to his second coming, in the Glory of the Gospel-spirit, devils and men have been, all along this world, contradicting and blaspheming. Then shall his invisible saints be manifested and brought forth, in the visibility of that spiritual life, which all along satans reign, has been hid with Christ, in God. At this manifestation of the sons of God, all the shame cast on them, by visible saints in holy flesh, shall be laid at their own doors, to their eternal confusion ; *Es. 66. 5.* Then shall the truly righteous spiritual saint, be generally discerned and distinguished from the visible first-covenant saints and churches, in holy flesh, who will be found the most criminal sinners in the whole world ; *Mat. 3. 17. 18. Mat. 7. 21, 23.* Spiritual saints, under the married visage or state of their natural man, sit in ashes, lye in the dust, are reckoned the

the off-scouring of all things, a spectacle of contempt and reproach to the whole world of natural angels and men, (1 Cor. 4. 9. 13.) till Christ appear in the same spirit they are of. Then, they shall appear with him, in the same glory; 1 Joh. 3. 2. This is the manifestation of the sons of God; Rom. 8. 19. All along this world, no visible remedy for spiritual saints, but quietly to bear the reproach of Christ, from visible Saints, in holy flesh, that sit and speak against them, and are ready to flatter themselves, that God is of their mind, such a one as themselves; Psal. 50. 20, 21. *How long, Lord, holy and true, will it be, say true saints, ere thou avenge the quarrel of thy new and everlasting Covenant, and all the reproaches and injuries we lie under, for owning and witnessing it, from this insolent, insulting world?* But, of all Ages, will true Saints be hardest put to it, in these last times. For, in these, *Satan will come with great rage, as knowing he has but a short time, before the perioding of his reign, and commencing of Christs.* Men have given heed to seducing spirits in all ages, but in these latter times, will this be more frequent, general, and remarkable than ever. Of these latter times, in which there will be a more general Apostacy from Gospel-light, than ever before, Christ himself gives us an account, as the times, immediately preceding his second coming. And the great Apostacy, therein, will be a sign of his near approach, for the perioding of Man's day, and Satans reign. In this season, Christ tells us, *There shall arise false Christs, and false Prophets, with great Signs, and lying Wonders, by which they shall deceive many, and, if possible, the very Elect.* The Devil and his instruments, will, by this means, cause such great tribulation to true Saints, as hath not been, from the beginning of the World, nor ever shall be; Mat. 24. 21. The reign of the Devil over this world, bears date from his first Apostacy from God, and continues till Christ's second coming, to seize and take all Rule and Power out of the hands of all visible and invisible Principallities and Rulers of this World. At his first coming, himself suffered, under this combin'd reign of Devils and Men. And so must his followers, till they appear with him, in the spiritual glory of his Kingdom. Till then, Christ's and their reign is Passive. They become Victors over the tyrannical will of enemies, by suffering the worst they can do, rather than comply with them, in their rebellion against God. All that stumble at the living Word of God, and fall upon this stone, the Gospel-spirit of Christ, in himself and saints, shall be broken, in the passive reign of Christ and his saints. But, when he takes to himself his great Power, and active reign, this stone will fall upon them, and grind them to powder, Mat. 21. 44. *He will dash them in peeces, like a potters vessell;* Psal. 2. 9. World and devil, in the times immediately preceding this great change of affairs, will more abound in all sorts of evil, both of flesh and spirit, both gross and mytical wickedness, then ever. But this that seemes most dismall, to the reason of the natural man in the saint, is to the faith of his spiritual, a ground of encouragement, to lift up his head, this being a sign of redemption drawing nigh, and that the just Judge, Lord and King, is ready to come forth and set all to rights. The spiritual saint will look up, and take courage, when the first covenant saints heart will fail him for fear, from the *gentiles or heathen parties* success, in running down the mysti-
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cal earthly *Jerusalem*, or form of godlines, in all variety and way, and trampling it under their feet, *Luk. 21. 24-28*. So much, as to what the latter times are.

Secondly, Whats the more remarkable departing from the faith, therein, then ever before, and that, by giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils? Departers from the faith, must be such as by Gospel-light have received the knowledge of the truth, and then wilfully sin against it, and turn from it, to known spirits of falshood, to receive the doctrines of devils. This is the unpardonable sinning against the holy ghost; *Heb. 10. 26*. Gospel or spiritual light, gives a view or knowledge of Christ in his spiritual life, and of the terms and way of attaining it. All changable good, and all manner of evil, filth of flesh and spirit are to go together, by the death-blows of the spirit of the Cross, upon nature; and by the quickning-work of the same spirit into a newness of life, is unchangable goodness or everlasting righteousness set up in the room thereof. This cures all evil in man, and secures him, at length, from all sin or punishment, for ever. For a man, by Gospel-light, to have, in Prospect, these glorious advantages to himself, by submitting to the declared terms of entering into the New-covenant with God, by the sacrifice of all he was possessed of, in the old (*Psal. 50. 5.*) and turn from that light of truth, to the doctrine of the devil, is such aggravated folly and madness, as exceeds all words. By this wilful departure from God, and refusing so great salvation, shewed and offered them, do men judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life (*Act. 13. 46.*) and God judges them worthy of everlasting death, under his fiery indignation that shall devour all such wilful and incorrigible adversaries; *Heb. 10. 26, 27*. This Apostacy from Christ, is here declared to proceed from, and be occasioned by mens giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; known by them, so to be. Doctrines of devils are such as Satan and his Instruments come forth with, in imitation of the highest spiritual Truths of Christ, on purpose to undermine and invalidate the same. And this will fill up Satans mystery of Iniquity, in these latter times. He will personate that new-creation-spirit and life, Saints are waiting for Christ to appear in, at his second coming. And as clothed with the appearance of that creature-spirit, that's in personal-union with the divine, will he assert his evil angelical spirit to be God, even the divine nature it self; *2 Thes. 2. 4*. This must needs be his highest, most daring and presumptuous practice of spiritual wickedness, which he chiefly reserves for his occasions, in these latter times. And this will he do, beyond all possibility of discovering his deceit, by the utmost wisdom of man, in single first-covenant-light and life. Nothing, short of the Gospel-spirit of Christ, can detect him. Having thus laid and prepared his matters, he reckons himself in a fair way to vent his doctrines, with the very stamp and character of divine authority upon them, as the undoubted Oracles of God himself, by his living Word. And thus will this spirit of greatest error and falshood, confidently assert the highest blasphemies against God and Christ, imaginable. He will also transform himself and fellows, into the likeness of Christs holy Angels of light, that he will employ, in the preparatory dispensation to his second coming, to waken up his spiritual seed in the elect, throughout the whole world, and so gather them together,

into

Into actual communion with him, in the spirit of the kingdom; *Mat. 24. 31.* Satan will also have his Apostles amongst men, transformed into the likeness of the Apostles of Christ, and by him influenced and tun'd for his purposes and designs, to make the utmost of it, in these latter times, against God, Christ, elect Angels and Saints. For all these, will he and his Angels, Apostles and Prophets, labour to pass, as univervally as they can. But, Christs actual appearing, and causing his divine glory to shine forth, in his new-creation Temple, will unmask the whole mystery of iniquity, take off all disguises, and lay the whole incorrigible party of evil angels and men, under the full weight of that wrath, which belong to them, from the irresistible hand and power of him, they have presumptuously exalted themselves, against. The summary doctrine of devils, is, that satan himself is god, and that his party of angels and men, in this self-exalted posture, and disguise, under him, are the only true blessed angels and saints. So, the doctrines of devils, are calculated to the countenancing, building up, and warranting men safe, for salvation, in but that restored first covenant life of the law, in their own nature, in which if they take up their rest, they are fixed with him, in unchangable enmity to God and the Gospel. This was his doctrine to *Eve*; *Ye shall not die, at all.* Ye have eternal life, already, by the first creation. No need of a second. This doctrine of lies he has carried on, with wonderful success, in all ages catching multitudes of professors, in his net. But those, that from wilful hatred to Christs clearly discover'd new-creation life and Gospel-truths, with the discovering light thereof, turn themselves to the known doctrines of devils, are irrecoverably gone. Satan accuses God to men, and men to God. He charges God, as a hard master; Christ, as a bloody husband, requiring unreasonable things of his creatures, the death of their nature at best, as the indispensable condition of being married to the son of God, and saved. By this means, he tempts men, to take up with him, in filth of spirit, or unchangable enmity to God and his Gospel-spirit and then, to filth of flesh, also. These things he attempts, even on true saints, and then accuses them to God, for such follies as, for a season, he has seduced them into, and that, under the blackest aggravations, imaginable, to provoke God to cast them off, and deliver them up, for ever, into his hands. Thus does he bestir himself, on all hands, to bring, if possible, the very elect, into the same destruction with himself. Yet, not one of these, will he ever be able to pluck out of the father or sons everlasting arms of mercy; *Joh. 10. 28, 29.* But the hypocrites in *Sion* (that would have the first covenant-life and righteousness of the Law, in their restored nature, passe for the new covenant life of the Gospel, in the spirit of grace) willingly give themselves up to these seducing spirits, and greedily drink in the doctrines of devils. So are they fetched off, from all faith, or regard to Christ, in his spiritual life, or any doctrine and words thereof. They are lodged up with satan, in his accursed, other Gospel, in perfect contrariety to Christs, in every point. Never will this be more the case, never will professors so generally run after these doctrines of devils, or satans ministers have more thronged auditories, in a course of direct enmity to the Gospel-spirit and all its words, then when Christ is ready to come forth, therein. They hate Christ and all his Gospel-truths, and turn

in their love, to the known doctrines of devils. And then, God will, in judgment, strengthen their self-chosen delusion upon them, under these seducing spirits they turn to, that they shall firmly believe the very doctrines of devils, that they all may be damned, that believe not or obey the truth, in the love thereof; *2 Thes. 2. 11, 12. Es. 66. 4.* Thus, seducing devils, wilful men, and the most righteous God, do, on differing accounts, all center in one and the same point, to lodge men in a combind, self-chosen interest, with devils, in unchangeable enmity to God, and damnation to themselves, under the unchangeable wrath of God. And all this dealing of God with them, will, at last, be made appear, undeniably righteous, in their own sight. Christ will waken up his Gospel-light in their consciences, by coming forth in the full brightness and all-discovering cleanness thereof. And this will stop and silence all their mouths of iniquity, forcing them to see and own his wrath upon them, to be as undeniably just, as irresistibly powerful, having wilfully turned from his known doctrine of truth, and given themselves up, to seducing spirits, and known doctrines of devils.

Verf. 2. Speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron.

Evil angels, by their lying doctrines, beget in evil men, through their wiling and ready receiving thereof, the like seared consciences with themselves, so as in their unchangeable enmity to God. Christ and all his gospel-truths, to be intenable and fearless of any danger, incident to them. The touch of spirits is an altering touch. The powerful, regenerating touch of the spirit of man by the spirit of Christ, transforms it out of its changeable into its unchangeable righteous life. It assimilates it to itself, in unchangeable union of mind and will with God. On the other hand, the powerful transforming touch of satans unchangeable evil spirit, baptizes the but changeably good spirit of man, into unchangeable union with him, in enmity to God. So men, with devils, become seared. This is the sad state of wilful apostates from gospel-truth. There's no possibility of remedy for them. No sense of evil in them, in the highest practices of spiritual wickedness. Litteral searing, the figure of this, benumbs, and dries up the flesh, as to all its heat, life, and sensibleness, so as to render it altogether unsensible, hardened, and dead. The very spirit or blasphemy against the gospel-spirit of Christ, and all the formerly known truths thereof, is chosen by them, as the principle of all their life, thought, desire, and action. So, the very will of the devil is done by and in them, with greediness and delight, and without any sense or control. Christ has given them over. He withdraws his Gospel-light, and will not trouble or interrupt them in their wicked practicings against him, till he comes, once for all, upon them. When the devil has thus clearly ferched them off from gospel-light, he will plie his work, in building them up a flesh in the first covenant righteous life of nature, in unchangeable union with him, and enmity to God and the second. Then their hearts and consciences are seared benumbed and deadened, as to any spiritual sense or tenderness, towards Christ. In his posture, Christ, finding the first covenant righteous teaching and professing Jews, calls them serpents, a generation of vipers, and children of the devil. Under this compleat workmanship of the devil, are such apostates found speaking lies, in hypocrisy, in exact harmony of mind, with himself, venting the doctrines

of devils, in the nearest possible resemblance of Christ's Gospel-truths; they are in unchangable enmity, to. So are they wolves in sheeps clothing. And, herein are they back'd and assisted with the utmost dexterity and power of devils, as engaged and employed in the highest service to their designs, against the Gospel of Christ. In these latter times, will this more signally than ever, be the joynt practice of devils and men, through the sinful transformation of devils into false Christs, and men into false Apostles and Prophets, to preach their diabolical doctrines and inspirations, 2 Cor. 11. 13, -- 15. and Mat. 24. 24. Tis the expresse declaration of the spirit of Christ, here, that this shall be the case and practice of seared Apostates, in these latter times, by giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. They will speak lies in hypocrisy, having seared consciences, in union with them. Speaking lies in hypocrisy, having seared consciences and forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, all relates to devils (*vers. 1.*) who transform these Gospel-Apostates into union with themselves, in all, by cauterizing them.

Verf. 3 Forbidding to marry (the Ethiopick Version reads, requiring them to contract an unlawful matrimony) and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving, of them which believe and know the truth.

The Roman so bids marriage and meats, in a literal sense. But this is too lean and too narrow to be all, meant by devils prohibition of them. The mystical marriage and meats, by God appointed and created, but by devils, forbidden, are of two sorts. And both are received with thank giving, by them who believe and obey the truth. Men are invited to a twofold marriage with Christ and meats or communications from him, suited to each, in a first and second Covenant life, successively, one after another. By a right and lawful use of the former, which is the obedient surrender and loss of it by death, are they sure to partake of the latter. All men and angels received the first, by the first-creation; Some of both, receive the second by a second. Men receive again, the first, as the first benefit of Christs death; the second, as the second and crowning benefit thereof. The first makes a servant in the house of God, that abideth not for ever: The second, a son, that abideth ever; *Joh. 8. 35.* Christ gives the suitable meats, for the nourishing, edifying, or building men up, in each, at his respective Tables. And by his husbandly influences, renders them fruitful in their distinct marriage unions with him, in first, and second covenant. And all is to be received from him, in both, with thanksgiving. This truth, concerning both, together with the right obedient passing out of the first into the second marriage with Christ, we find, *Rom. 7. 1, -- 4.* The first marriage with Christ, is under the Law of a carnal command, in the restored life of the Law: The second is after the power of an endless life, in the everlasting spirit of the Gospel. Man ought to be faithful to Christ, in the first, so long as he thinks fit to live with him, there. But in literal marriage, used as a Type of this first mystical marriage with Christ, all obligations are dissolved and made void, by the death of the Husband. Where the life on both sides is changable and mortal, this dissolution of the marriage, by death, must needs come to pass, by an invincible necessity, and as an inevitable con-

consequent of the instability of the life, the marriage is founded and managed in. On the death or departure of the mystical as well as literal husband, that relation ceases. Man is lawfully discharged from such obedience to Christ himself, as is performable in the life of the Law, or activity of his own nature, therein, when Christ becomes dead to him, and is gone from him, refusing any longer, to perform the office of a husband, there. Christ now requires this first-covenant-wife, to follow his suffering steps into the same death, in order to be married to him, as another man, or the same, in another state of life, a Gospel life of everlasting righteousness, the life of the second Covenant, into which he has raised our nature, in himself, out of the death of the first. This second marriage-union can never be dissolved, because founded in an everlasting righteous life, on all hands, in husband and Wife. True Saints, in conformity to Christ, become dead to the Law, by the obedient surrender and loss of that mortal first-covenant-life, in which once married to him, under the Law. And this is the undispensible qualification of them, for the second marriage with him, as risen from the dead, into that life, in which only they can bring forth fruit unto God, or be saved. The other man, they not only lawfully may, but undispensably, under pain of damnation, must be married to, is the same Christ, in another life. The other man, 'tis absolutely unlawful to be married to, is the man of sin, the son of perdition, the devil. It the first-covenant-spouse of Christ, marry that other man, she is a spiritual adulteress. For her first husband, though dead, as to the fading life of the first-covenant, lives for ever in the second. *I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore;* Rev 1:18. None but this other man, Christ himself, in another life, is it lawful for his deferred first-covenant-spouse, to be married to. Marriage-union with Christ, in the first-covenant, makes but shadowy saints, in mans holy flesh Image of the earthly; in the second, true saints, in Gods holy spirit and Image of the heavenly. Both these marriages with, and means or communications from Christ, in a suitableness to the life of each covenant, the devil forbids and denies, in direct contradiction to Gods meaning in both. He will deny and hinder, as long as he can, a first-covenant-marriage with Christ, in the life and righteousness of the Law. For this casts him out of his rule and dominion over man, in the dark polluted state of his nature. In this first marriage, are men bound, in love and obedience to Christ, as their fleshly bridegroom, to deny and suppress the vile affections and thoughts of the corrupt spirit of nature, yet hanging about them. But, when by Gospel-light, convincingly shewed, and offered Christ, in a more excellent state of life, and invited to a second marriage-union with him, therein; this marriage, with the kingdom-wine, living-bread, and never perishing meats, or communications from Christ, suited to nourish, edify, or build them up in that life, will satan oppose, to his utmost. He will leave no means unattempted, in the highest improvement of all his subtilty and power, to forbid and hinder men from such marriage and meats. For, these, if received, secure men for ever from him. In carrying on this design, will he magnify the first-marriage, to the utter exclusion of the second. So, speaks lies in hypocrisy, concerning both covenant-lives, marriages and meats. He asserts the life and righteousness in the first,

to be everlasting, as to *Eve*, *Ye shall not die, at all*. What, saies he, Will ye part with a life, food, and clothing, received from Christs own hand, and return to the needy, and naked condition ye were born in, dead in trespasses and sins? Will ye, after all Christs pains and care about you, to make you a people of God, throw all up, and turn heathens, again? This does he urge, as the only apostacy, madness and folly, they can be guilty of. Hereupon, he periwades them, both on the account of pleasing God, and doing good to themselves, in holding fast the priviledges and advantages they have experienced in that marriage-union with Christ, nor to part with that life, and glory of their own nature therein, on any termes, or promises, whatsoever. Thus does he produce his strong reasons, endeavouring by the enticing and self-plealing words of his serpentine wisdom, to argue and flatter them, into the same destruction with himself, in unchangable enmity to the infinite divine and everlasting righteous new covenant-life of Christ. He perswads them, not to part with their own righteousnesses, in the life of the law, that he may render them, with himself, incorrigible enemies to the Gospel-life of Christ and God.

Thus does he labour to keep up the first-covenant-life (that is but a shadow, a fading flower and altogether vanity) in the heart, and love of man, in preference and direct opposition to the second, which is spirit, grace, substance, everlasting righteousness and truth. This, which satan knowes to be the object of Gods everlasting delight and love, having his seal of approbation upon it, (*Joh. 6. 27.*) Is, for that very reason and cause, the object of his utmost malice, dislike and hatred. He favours not the things of God, in his spirit of grace, but things of man or angels, in the spirit of nature, in unchangable enmity to God. Enmity to God, and his gospel-spirit, was the first sin of man ; the losse of the righteous life of the law, the punishment thereof. When this lost life is restored again, by the redeemer, the deadly wound that laid all mankind dead in sin, is healed. But the enmity still remains, untouched, under all the work of the Law, upon men, or fresh comming and setting up of the command or first-covenant life of the Law in them. That most dangerous disease is but only skinned over, hid and covered thereby. That root of all mystical uncleanneses, idolatries, spiritual wickedneses and abominations, is not plucked up, but strengthened thereby, as got into its strongest hold. As men and devils order the matter, the strength of this sin is the Law. Enmity to the Gospel-life and righteousness of God, is revived and strengthened by the righteousness of man. The sin of enmity against the Gospel, takes occasion by the very righteousness of the Law, through mans folly and satans artifices, to destroy man ; *Rom: 7. 12.* This sin against the Gospel, shewed it self most signally in *Paul*, when most eminent in the righteousness of the Law ; *Phil. 3. 6.* *Act. 9. 1.* and *26. 9, 11.* Never does man, with more masculine courage and irrefragable confidence oppose Gods holy spirit, then when eminent in his own holy flesh. If satan can fix and render man unchangable in this enmity, he has done his work. Then, tis eternal death. Tis a state of bondage and death, while changable and curable, by the death-work of the cross on that righteous state of nature, in which, seated. When man is delivered out of the death of his nature, in trespasses and sins, this enmity yet, is another state of death,

death, under the most fruitfull exercise of his restored first covenant life. Enmity to the Gospel-spirit of everlasting life, is a state of mystical, spiritual death. These are the sad circumstances of man, at best, in his own restored nature. So far yet, is he from true salvation, that he is in direct enmity to that spirit, in which alone tis to be had. And if satan can fix man, in a self love to his own restored wisdom and righteousness, the establishing him there, keeps him from ever entering into Gods righteousness, or being saved. This enmity to God, lies, as dead, in man, while he is dead in trespasses and sins; but springs up afresh into a masculine vigour, activity and daring boldnes, on his revival into the life and righteousness of the Law, *Rom. 7. 8. 9.* When man is revived into the life of the law, enmity to the life of the Gospel, revives in him, also. Man, in the heathenish or corrupt state of nature, dead in sin, can take no right cognizance of the first covenant saints quarrel against the second. A first covenant people of Christ were the self-confidants, that were hot for crucifying him. *Pilate* and his heathen party would have cleared their hands of the guilt. His blood be on our heads and on our children, said the other party. And *Gallio* the heathen Deputy of *Achaia*, cared for none of those things. If it were a matter of wrong, or wicked lewdness, (against the common rational light or law of nature, in all mankind, that properly falls under my cognizance) reason would, I should bear with you; hear and determine your cause; But if it be a difference or question about your Law (as set up against Gospel) look ye to it. He be judge of no such matters. He kept his civil sword and power, within its due bounds, and drave them from his judgment seat, to agree among themselves, as well as they could. Their charge against *Paul*, was; This fellow perswadeth men to worship God, contrary to the law; that is, to their mistaken sense of the first covenant-law; but most surable to the true meaning of that very law; in the spirit of the Gospel, or in spirit and truth. *Gallio*, a heathen and stranger to first and second covenant, law and Gospel, looked not on himself as concerned in their controversy. All this, we find, *Act. 18. 12. - 17.* Heathens, publicans and harlots, in the corrupt spirit of nature, stand lesse prejudiced against the very Gospel, then first covenant professors of godliness, in the form thereof, through their own default. The true Gospel-fifth-monarchist, preaches sword and fire on all the pseudo-fifth-monarchist (that will needs be reigning in the first covenant-spirit of the Law) sets up in, for salvation, *1 Cor. 4. 8. - 10.* Those that are wise, strong, rich, full, and honourable in Christ, by first covenant communications from him, in the life of the Law, and will there be reigning as Kings, they re gn with out us, saies *Paul*, yea, in direct opposition to the spirit of the Gospel, and all spiritual saints. None so contrary-minded to Gospel, as they. They contradicted and blasphemed that, when heathens desired to hear more of it, *Act. 13. 44. - 48.* *Paul*, well-knowing this, appeared rather to the heathen Tyrant, at *Rome*, then be exposed to a triall amongst self-confident first covenant Jews, at home, who had combined with their council, to kill him. But the heathen soldiery rescued him, *Act. 23. 12. 34.* The universal experience of all mankind, forces this acknowledgment, that the righteous life, set up in man, by the first-creation, was a changable, loicable thing. But satan has put it

it in mens heads, that the same life, as restored by Christ, is not changable, but an established state of everlasting righteousness. This establishing man in his righteousness, is the very design and workmanship of the devil, upon him. By this means, he marries men to himself, the prohibited other man (*Rom. 7. 3*) and by his evil angelical influence, renders them more fruitful and excellent in that first covenant-life, as established by his hand, therein, in unchangable enmity to God, and the second. And thence-forward, all their works of righteousness, performances, and duties of worship, under his conduct and steerage, are brought forth and done to him. They are now in a sort of new and everlasting covenant with him, and so, in unchangable enmity to God. This is the latter end worse then their beginning. For when born dead in trespasses and sins, and enemies of God, this twofold death, in sin, and enmity, or filth of flesh and spirit, was curable: But now, incurable. They have delivered themselves up to the devil, for ever, to receive the indeleble character of his spirit of unchangable enmity to God, upon them. When Christ is departed, as a fleshly bridegroom, from first-covenant saints, in holy flesh, they never hear more of him, as a husband, unlesse they submit to the same death of nature, with himself, in order to meet him, in the second, and be married to him as risen from the dead. If they look for a second husband in a first-covenant-life, that's the devil. When Christ has left them, to wither, decay, and die away, here, under his Gospel-crofs, Satan offers to bui'd them up again therein, if they'l but listen to his counsel. When he has brought l is matters to this pass, and put his establishing hand upon them, then are they h s most accomplished Instruments, to oppose the Gospel, and do all manner of despite to the spirit of Grace, and all the true Gospel-words thereof, in Christ or his Saints. The righteous first-covenant *Jews*, by his instigation, said of Christ himself, *He was mad, and had a devil*. He prompts such a first-covenant People of God, as turned into a Synagogue of Satan, to vent his Doctrines of lies and falshoods, both concerning the first and second-covenant Spirits, Lives, and Principles. They'l assert that which is but the life and righteousness of the Law, to be everlasting, and that none therefore ought to look after any other. So speak they flat lies both concerning God, the life of the Law, and Man, therein.

1. Concerning God, that he can own his Creatures as objects of his everlasting delight and love, in a changable life, that's but a fading flower in all the goodness and righteousness thereof.

2. Concerning that Life; that it is everlasting.

3. Concerning Man, that he therein has absolute justification, before God, and final Salvation.

And then a fourth lye followes; That he need never look after any other. All these lies, imposed on People by Satan and his Ministers, for Gospel-truths, tend to this; the setting up the life and righteousness of Man, or the Law, as turned into unchangable enmity to the Gospel-spirit of Christ, for a Gospel-state of everlasting salvation, the true Saints *Everlasting Rest*. At this rate, all the right Gospel-words of Christ, are exploded, as a meer nullity, or worse; a blasphemous fiction,

not to be admitted the least countenance or hearing. Devils, above all things, forbid this Gospel-life, marriage, and meats, doctrines and truths. Of all this life and food, will they and their apostles speak all the lies and falsehoods, imaginable. They'll gild over their first-creation vanities, and thrust them into the room thereof, calling them all by their names, spirit, grace, truth, regeneration, new name, and what not? All scripture-words, relating to the character of the true Gospel saint, will they clap upon the back of the unchangable enemies of Christ, Gospel, and all his saints. And then will they call true saints, blasphemers; as deceived with a phantasm, a meer nullity, a diabolical fiction, or humane imagination, an airy notion, without any thing of substance or reality in it. Thus do they advance satans trivial first-creation nothings, into the room, name, dignity and titles of Christs spiritual new creation all things; things eternal; and so labour to overthrow the faith of saints, therein. This does satan find, easy to bring men to. For, all Christ spiritual, heavenly, Gospel things, lie clear out of the reach and comprehension of mans most enlighened natural understanding and wisdom; a d man, through pride, is unwilling to believe there are any concerning things or truths, but he can reach, therein. So, the old serpent deafes them to the voice of all spiritual charmers, charm they never so wisely. All Christs Gospel-truths sound strangely and incredibly in their ears; like a chimerical nothing. But satans Gospel is easy to be understood, and suited to the natural palate and temper of all mankind. So, he carries all before him. The whole world wonders after the *Beast*; *Rev. 13. 3.* His first covenant things, wisdom, glory, fruits, and works of righteousness, duties, performances, prayers, preachings, with his gilding transformations and spiritualizings of all, do so glister in mens eyes, gratify their will, and amuse their understanding, that they greedily receive all for Gospel, and wholly turn away their ear from the very Christ, the very Gospel, to the very devil, and his. Satans Gospel is calculated to natures palate, has no hard sayings, or frightful doctrine of the cross, in it. By his Gospel, man may remain on his own bottom, stand on his own feet, and in his own inlightend understanding and will (the principles of the law, the discerning and desiring powers of that life, in his own nature will and way) receive and do all, requisite for his salvation. By these steps and wayes of falsehood, does he gain a world of people from Christ, after they have received a first covenant life, and also second-covenant light, by which, brought to see him, in his new-creation life, wherein offered to become a spiritual Lord and Husband to them. All this will satan do, more signally and dangerously then ever, in these later times. He will labour to prevent the first marriage-union of men with Christ, but abundantly more solicitous will he be, to prevent the second; because that will wholly exclude his interest in them, and enable them to discover all his cabinet-counsels and intrigues, in his first-creation kingdom of darkness, thorow-out his whole mystery of iniquity. But both covenant lives, and marriages with Christ therein, are to be received, in their order, first that thats natural, and after, that which is spiritual, with the meats and proper food of each, with thanksgiving. Satan would not have men peep out of the dark state of their polluted nature, the vile affections and brutalities of literal

teral Sodom", into the first. He would not have them come near Christ, at all, but live wholly without God, and without hope, in the world. But where this cannot be, as his after-game with men, will he use all wayes imaginable to prevail with them to set up themselves in the first covenant, against Christ in the second; and so, perfectly exclude Christ in his spiritual life, from being the Object of their faith. Thus, as a false friend to Christ and saints, in a first-covenant-life, does he act the part of an implacable enemy to the second. And all this does he, because (as the *Aethiopick Version* reads) he appoints men to contract an unlawful marriage-union with himself, in unchangeable enmity to Christ, which is the utmost wickedness, he or they can be guilty of.

Verf. 4. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving.

Every creature, all the changable good things of man or angel, set up in them, by God, in the first creation, or unchangeable good things of God, set up in either, by the second, are good in their several kinds, and differing excellencies. The natural, or first covenant spirit, principle, life, and meats thereof are good in themselves, as created of God; and beneficial to man, if rightly used and fed on, in the due season thereof: but, not if kept up, beyond the appointed time, in enmity to the transcendently more excellent life and things of the second. The law or first-covenant life, (with all the food, fruits, or things thereof) used lawfully, in sacrifice to God, by death, as the undispenable passage into the everlasting life and righteousness of the second, is good. But if unlawfully kept up, beyond the appointed time, in enmity to the second, it corrupts and is turned into evil, with all the things thereof. All evil then, is the consequent and product of the creatures wilful miscarriage and folly, by the unlawful use of what is but changably good, against what is unchangably so. Self-love and self-confidence, spoil all, that was at first created good, in man. The law it self and all true ministers of it, say with *John Baptist*, concerning the first covenant-life thereof, *I am not he*, this is not the Christ, in his Gospel life of everlasting righteousness. *I am of the earth, earthly*; and must decrease and vanish away; Christ in his new-covenant-life, *heavenly, and above all*; *Job. 3. 30, 31*. The two distinct first and second covenant lives, with the respective things and meats of each, thus rightly stated, understood, and used, are the good creatures of God, and nothing to be refused, from first to last in their required seasons, but received and fed on, with thanksgiving. But the former, wilfully and against conviction, set up in opposition to the latter, are so far from being kept up and fed on, with thanksgiving to God, that in union with the devil, men are found contradicting and blaspheming (or speaking evilly, slightly and contemptibly of) the everlasting righteous gospel-life of Christ, as a meer fiction, and nullity. The highest point of thanksgiving, expressible by man, in the first, is the obedient surrender of it, by death, for the second. Th se that count their first-creation things, more then they are, things eternal; Will count Gods new-creation things less than they are, or

just nothing at all. First covenant-life with the first created things and meats thereof, ought to be accounted, just what they are, not unchangable in the goodness thereof, but corruptible vannies, with all the fruits or works of righteousness, producible or performable therein. So, are men to behave themselves, with *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, as pilgrimes and strangers in this mystical first-creation-*Canaan* or state of life, having their eyes, hearts, hopes and expectations, fix'd, on the second, the true Land of promise, the **SAINTS EVERLASTING REST**. This is Christ own counsel, that we labour for and seek after that never-perishing meat, that is suted to edify or build us up in his never-perishing life; *Jo. 6. 27.*

Verf. 5. For it is sanctified by the word of God, and prayer,

The right use of the two distinct covenant lives, with all the things appertaining to each, has been made by Christ himself, the living word of God. By his priestly new covenant spirit of life, wherein the living word and son of God, did he sacrifice his own first covenant life, as son of man, in flesh. The use he made of his fading life of the law, was the voluntary surrender thereof, in obedience to his father, by death, as not good in his sight, because not unchangably so. *There is none good, but God*; that is, God in his infinite divinity and his everlasting righteous creature-spirit, or living word, which is also called God; and all blessed Angels and saints, born of that creature-spirit, that is called God; who are, thereby, rendred unchangably Good, in Gods sight, and objects therefore of his everlasting delight and love. Nothing is good in Gods sight, but his divinity, or what is in personal union with it, or personal union with that creature-spirit in Christ, that is so. Yea, and first covenant or first creation-life and things thereof are allowed the title Good, as created and used in a subjection and tendency to the second; *Gen. 1. 31.* And they are made unchangably Good when sanctified by the word of God and prayer, that living word of God, which is the spirit of all true prayer. Christ, the word of God, prayed thus, on the behalf of his saints; *Sanctify them through thy truth: Thy word is truth; Jo. 17. 17.* Cause them obediently to submit to the sacrificing work of thy spirit of truth, in order to translate them, by way of resurrection, into the everlasting life of the priest that slayes them; for their eternall sanctification. *And for their sakes, says he, I sanctifie myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth (v. 19.)* As followers of my suffering steps. The whole lump of spiritual saints, his mystical members, were virtually sanctified, as comprehended, in his sacrifice. And by following his suffering steps they actually enter with him, into his everlasting righteous creature-life, within the veil. This is done, by that true spirit of prayer in them, the desires whereof center in the very thing God requires of them, the sacrifice of their nature, which evidences their willing subjection to the death thereof. Thus the first covenant-life, with all its fading things which are the creatures of God, are sanctified by the word of God, or priestly, gospel-spirit of Christ, which is also the only spirit of all acceptable prayer, in himself and saints,

Verf.

Verf. 6. *If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things; thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith, and of good doctrine, wherunto thou hast attained.*

Here's a particular advice to *Timothy*, so to perform the duty of his place, as to evidence himself a good minister of Jesus Christ, by minding his fellow-saints of these things. What things? The important Gospel-truths, above-declared (*Verf. 4.*) that every creature of God, is good in it self, and good to man, if received and rightly used, with thanksgiving, or to the praise of the giver, as answering his mind. These are the things; that, by preaching the truth, as it is in Jesus (who exactly made the true and ight use of first and second covenant life, in his own person, with all the things belonging to each) true Gospel-Ministers must mind their hearers of. This must they do, that their Gospel-brethren, beholding their nature, at best in the first-covenant-life of the Law, evidently set forth, as crucified before their eyes in Christs person, may not entertain any backsliding thoughts, with the bewitched *Galatians*, of setting up for salvation, in that fading life of holy flesh, Christ crucified in himself. Gospel-Ministers ought most heedfully to warn men, in this great and concerning point, that they do not set up with Satan, in that state of life, for salvation, the kindly death whereof is indispensably necessary to their being saved. There is an absolute necessity of conformity to Christ in the death and loss of all, received by us, in the first-covenant, that we may live for ever with him, in the second. They that preach up the righteousness of man, in the restored life of nature, for salvation, preach but a conformity to Christ in that life and state of holy flesh, that he is departed out of. *He is not there, he is risen*, into quite another life. True salvation can be found only in that state, wherein Christ lives for evermore; *Rev. 1. 18.*

Verf. 7. *But refuse profane and old wives fables; and exercise thy self unto godliness.*

Having shewed *Timothy* what he would have him do, he declares here what he would not have him do, but shun; *Profane or foolish old wives fables*. Law, as abused and set up against Gospel, is signified by these *fables*. All preachings up thereof, all hopes and confidences therein for salvation, will appear at winding up, to have been *fables, permissions lies, and doctrines of devils*; the same they first preached to *Eve*, everlasting life, in a fading flower. This lying trade of a false-Gospel Ministry will run higher in the latter times than ever, to the exclusion of Christs Gospel, in a manner, out of all hearing. No greater obstruction to Christs Gospel in the whole world, than the Ministers of Satan's. They charge blasphemy on the preachers of Christs, as calling that restored righteous life of man, they warrant salvation in, a state of meer vanity, in which no such thing is ever to be found. Their accounting the first-covenant-life and state, wherein men and angels were set up,

by the first-creation, a state of true blessedness, is the very foundation of all their blasphemies against God and the holy Ghost, or Gospel-spirit, offering a state of everlasting righteousness and true blessedness, by a new creation. The unwarrantable over-value, of what God has done for us, in our first-creation, causes not only an under-value, of the transcendently more excellent things he offers us, by a second, but an absolute rejection of them, as a fiction. The life of the Law, and righteousness of man, that is but a ceremony, a vanishing shadow, a glory to be done away; this, preached up for salvation, is a *profane old wives fable*. It causes a profaning and slighting of Christ, in that more excellent Gospel-life, wherein alone, any can be saved. It excludes the very Christ, the very Gospel, and so shuts up the kingdom of Heaven. True Saints then, are to shun, as the greatest evil, and most dangerous poison, the said first-covenant-life of the Law, as turned by Satan into a *profane and old wives fable*, in unchangeable enmity to the Gospel. To stay in our holy flesh, when called out of it, by Gods holy spirit, and commanded to separate from it, as a polluted place, or thing (2 Cor 6. 17.) this will make it prove, instead of Salvation to us, our sore and remediless destruction; *Mic. 2. 10.* *Paul* himself was once so taken with, and zealous for this false rest, in the form of godliness and righteousness of man, in the restored life of the Law, that he persecuted the power of it, and righteousness of God, in the Gospel. So much of the negative; The affirmative part of *Pauls* advice, in this *Verse*, follows.

*And exercise thy self unto godliness, or (as the Ethiopick Version renders it)
subject thy self to the truth;*

Christs Gospel-spirit of infallible truth, and words thereof; not Satans spirit of lies, and *old wives fables*. The godliness here meant, is the power of Godliness, in Christs Gospel-spirit of everlasting righteousness. This is true holiness, or holiness in truth; Gods holiness, which men are made partakers of, by Christs new-creation workmanship upon them, through which he sets up the life of that spirit in them, in which he was the living word and suprem creature-image of God, from everlasting; *Ephes. 4. 24.* *This is everlasting life*; has immortality in it. Law-life, set up in man, by the first-creation, with all the righteous clothing and ornament thereof, or restored in him since, is a mortal perishing vanity, as well as the life and riches of his body. 'Tis New-covenant-life, only, has that *immortality in it, which is brought to light by the Gospel*. Saints then, are to exercise themselves unto this godliness, for their happy growth and proficiency in the power of godliness or new-creature-life of Christ. So will they increase *with the increase of God*, *Coh. 2. 10.* And in order to this blessed increase in a newness of life, must they submit to the demolishing work of the Gospel-spirit, on the life of the Law, till perfectly dead to the Law, and wholly alive unto God; *Joh. 3. 30.* We must hate our own fading life, to death, in love to that eternal life, which God calls his own; or not worthy of Christ, *Link. 14. 26, 27. and 17. 33. and Joh. 12. 25.*

Verf. 8. *For bodily exercise profiteth little (Syr. for a little time) but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*

Here are the differing natures of the first and second covenant lives, characterized. The first, is signified by *bodily exercise that profits little*, or but for a little time. The second, by *godliness that is profitable to all things*. The insignificance of sensual life and mans utmost labours therein, as to true happiness, discernable to all, engages us to search out a farther meaning of bodily exercise, here, discernable only by Gospel-light. Paul calls the whole natural man, with his living soul (or restored life of the first covenant law, wherein created) the *natural body*, 1 Cor. 15. 44, 45. *Bodily exercise* then, does here signify the utmost labour of the whole man, in the principles of a righteous first covenant life. Nothing possible to be done in the active power of this, can ever make him truly happy. Passive obedience in it, even to the death thereof, under the cross, or demolishing work of the Gospel-spirit of Christ, is the best use he can make of it, and only way to be possessed of that life, in the active power whereof, only, it is possible to please God, or be saved. If man (after convincingly shewed the Gospel-life of truth as it is in Jesus, and thereby called to part with all his fading life and riches, to partake thereof) refuses the exchange-terms ; his *bodily exercise*, thence-forward, is highly unprofitable to him, being direct rebellion against the Lord, in compliance with the devil, and conformity to this world, in such religion and worship, as is managable in *oldness of letter*, against *newness of spirit*. Tis only the Gospel-newness of life, in which man can exercise his whole being, with true profit to himself, and acceptableness to God. *Man in honour*, at his best estate, in the fading life and Glory of his first creation, is but as the beasts that perish ; Psal. 49. 12. He has no life in his immortal spirit or being, but what is as mortal, transient, and perishable, as the life of the brute beast, or meer sensual life of his own body. If he attain not a higher and better state, by exchange through death, then all first-covenant life, righteousness, and wisdom amounts unto, he will die as the fool (Ec. 2. 16.) and be in a far worse condition than a beast, through the immortality of his being. The wise and rich first covenant saint, with his holy flesh, will be stripped of all, and laid in an equality, for ever, as to that, with the fool or common sinner of the *Gentiles*, in the corrupt spirit of nature. All first covenant life, wisdom and riches, are as perishable, and of as slippery a tenure, as bodily life and the outward riches thereof. Tis mans high concern then, to submit to Gods terms for attaining that life of true godliness, in the Gospel-spirit of Christ, which is profitable to all things. And for this, must he part with the life and wisdom of his own spirit, the form of godliness and righteousness of man, which is profitable to nothing, of moment ; of no avail, in the most fruitful exercise of it, as to true blessedness. But the exercise of true godliness, in the spirit of Christ, is profitable to all things, having the promises of *this life, and the life to come*. Both these promises belong to them that exercise them.

themselves unto true godliness; as having obediently given up and ceased from the exercise of their beings in a first covenant life and form of godliness, in order to live unto God, walk, and exercise themselves in the Gospel-spirit of Christ, and power of godliness. In this spirit and image of the heavenly, only, is any, a true godly man. This spirit will make man *holy, as God is holy, and pure as Christ is pure*, that is, unchangably. Those, that with Paul, bear the marks of the dying of the Lord Jesus, under the death-blows of the cross, on their nature, at best, have the promise of the father, the everlasting righteous life of Christs Gospel-spirit, quickened and set up in them, in this life, world, or state of their unchanged mortal body. These *first fruits of the spirit* in them, enable them to walk in the comfort of the holy Ghost, with joy unspeakable and glorious. And what they have of this spirit of the world to come, while yet in this, is, beside the present rich consolation of it, a propheticall pledg, and self-evidencing demonstration of more a coming, in the life or world to come, even the full blessing of this Gospel-life, to the compleating of their joy, and wiping off all tears from their eyes. True godliness then, has, and comprehends in it, the promised spiritual life of Christ, and comforts thereof, in this world, and fulness of it, in that which is to come.

¶ *Verf. 9. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation.*

This. That the exercise of mans nature in the changable life of the first covenant, profits man but a little while, in the season only of its lawful use and exercise, against the vile affections of the corrupt spirit of nature, on the one hand; and faithfulness to Christs farther discoveries, on the other. But Godliness, or the exercise of mans nature in the everlasting life of the second, is profitable to all things, and that, for ever. 'Tis pleasing to God, and gives true comfort to man, in this world and the next. This true and faithfull saying, concerning these two distinct covenant-lives, is worthy of all acceptation, as of remarkable concern to be received, believ'd or obey'd by men. Their salvation lies upon it. They must yield up themselves, in the former to death, that they may partake of the latter, which is eternal life. All excellencies in the former, are to be parted with as *loss and dung*, for the spiritual life of true godliness, in the latter; *Phil. 3. 6, 8.* This Gospel-life of truth is most worthy their acceptation, on any terms. Buy this truth, at any rate; it can never be bought too dear: Sell, or part with it, at no rate; Though all the Kingdoms of the World, and glory of them, all visible and invisible excellencies, the most charming desireables in the whole first creation-world, be offered, to seduce you from the acceptance of it. This is the Gospel-Pearl of great price, all must be parted with, for. As it can never be bought too dear, it can never be sold dear enough. 'Tis the only thing of true profit and worth, for everlasting blessedness. Nothing but the being a new-creature in Christs spiritual-life of true godliness, does mans work; *Gal. 6. 15.* No true joy and comfort, in this world or next, but in the first-fruits and earnest of it, here, and then in the compleat inheritance of it hereafter. 'Tis eternal life abiding in man, here, and the kingdom of

heaven.

heaven, within him. It will fix his eye, heart and expectation, on the delights of the sons of God, the better countrey, the better city; a heavenly. And hereby, render him a pilgrim and stranger on the earth, dead to all the fading delights of the sons of men, in the whole first-creation-world, Satans earthly dominion; *Heb. vi. 13, 16.* True saints live in the spirit, in the light and irreistible power whereof, Christ will judge the world, and dash all enemies in peeces as potters vessels. This is the spirit, and this the life, that answers all that man needs from God; or God requires from him. 'Tis therefore worthy of all acceptation; let the terms appear never so hard, on which it can be received. If the exchange of our fading flower for it be refused, then does our fading flower prove a profane, old wives fable, and satans lie, to our irrecoverable ruine.

Vers. 10. For therefore we both labour, and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

Paul makes himself (and fellow-saints) an example to others, herein. He had parted with all his first-covenant life, riches, and Glory, for this Gospel-life of true godliness, and laboured abundantly in giving forth the right words, or Gospel testimony thereof, and quietly suffered all sorts of opposition and persecution, singly on that account. And on the same, did Christ himself endure contradictions and blasphemous reproaches, yea, and death it self, from first-covenant professors, in the form of godliness, and righteousness of man, but enemies to the power of it and righteousness of God, in the second; *Heb. 12. 2, 3.* All this reproach and persecution do we Gospel-saints suffer, sayes Paul, for our Gospel labours and testimony, because we trust in the living God, &c. Here is an account of Christs person as declared to be the living God, by his everlasting, righteous creature-spirit, that is everlasting salvation to all that partake of the life thereof. And by all, suffered and done by him, in his variety of creature-nature, in the first and second covenant life thereof, is he, also, the saviour of all men, as a common and general benefit of his death in the former, under his own sacrificing hand, in the latter. By his obedient surrender of our nature, to death in the former, he purchased the fresh gift of that life to others, that he crucified in himself. So is he a fountain set open for all, to cleanse them from filth of flesh, by setting up a righteous first-covenant principle of life, desire, thought, and action in them. All men may receive this common and generall salvation, in the activity and light of their own wills and understandings. All that love not their chains and bondage, in the dark, polluted, shameful state of their nature, beyond the glory, righteousness, and honour thereof, receive this first benefit of Christs death; that sort of righteous life, he crucified in his own person. Specially of those that believe, That is, obediently submit to the terms of receiving Christs Gospel life of everlasting Righteousness. This is special or everlasting salvation to them.

This is the second, peculiar, crowning benefit of Christs death, that can never be lost. Every one, that by Gospel-light, seeth the son (as he lives, not in his own will, as son of man in flesh, but will of his father, as son of God, justified

in spirit) and believeth on him; (or liveth not in his own will, but will of the son of God) hath everlasting life; *Jo. 6. 40.* For this doctrine, *Paul*, with other Gospel-saints, patiently suffered all sorts of reproach and persecution. And so far were they from desponding, under all, that they rejoiced in such tribulations, counting it their high honour, as thought worthy, with *Moses*, to bear the reproach of Christs new name; *Act. 5. 41.* *Heb. 11. 26.* Tis a high honour to saints, to have the reproaches of those, that reproach Christ himself, fall upon them; *Psal. 69. 9.* And it is a high dishonour to God and them, when by walking unfavourably to their Gospel-principle, they give occasion to the enemy to blaspheme, and so cause the reproaches of those that reproach them, to fall upon God, and his Gospel-spirit.

Verf. 11. These things command and teach.

True Gospel-preachers are to charge and command men to receive the truths they teach. They preach Christ, as God, in his infinite divinity, and as God also, or the living word of God (*Jo. 1. 1.*) In that creature spirit, by which he renders himself, communicable to his creatures. They preach him also as God, manifested in flesh; and, by the death of that, justified in spirit; in all, purchaser of common salvation for all men, or deliverance out of their death in trespasses and sins, by the restoring gift of a first-covenant righteous life, which heals that deadly wound, given all mankind, by the first sin of the first. And then, farther, do they declare him, as the giver of special or everlasting salvation, to all, that, in conformity to him, obediently part with his first gift, that life he crucified in himself, for his second and unspeakable gift of that everlasting Gospel-life, he raised our nature, in himself, into, and lives in, for evermore. These benefits of Christs death, to all men in general, and true saints, in speciall, are Gospel-preachers to command and teach, as needfull for all men to be acquainted with.

Verf. 12. Let no man despise thy youth: But be thou an example of the believers; in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

Paul here encourages *Timothy*, to follow his counsell, as the only way to prevent any mans justly despising his youth, or tender beginning in spiritual knowledge and experiences of Christ, in his Gospel-life. He advises him to be a teaching example in Gospel life (as well as a preacher of it) to others, by being blameless and fruitfull, in word, conversation, love, spirit, faith, purity. All these expressions signify a fruitfull walking according to the Gospel, as having the joyfull fruits of Christs spirit in him, and bringing forth fruit, therein, to God. Teaching Gospel-saints are more then ordinarily engaged, to be exemplary to others, in practice, by which their Gospel-light will shine before men, to the glorifying of God, and promoting the love of, and obedience to the truth, they preach, in others. The more also they live in the will of Christ, the more clearly will they know,

know his mind, and so grow more able, fit, and powerfull, for the declaring it, to others, *Jo. 7. 17.* The Gospel-spirit, is a principle of unchangable purity, that will, under its conduct and steerage, effectually teach man to order his conversation aright, in all things, towards God and man, so as to see the salvation of God; *Psal. 50. 23.* This do men come to, by offering praise or sacrificing, confession, and so glorifying God, by the obedient death and sacrifice of that first covenant life, which they see and confess, can never direct their steps, or order their conversation aright, before God. For it is not in man, that walketh therein, so to direct his steps, *Jer. 10. 23.* Their whole course, there, is evil, and their force not right; *Jer. 23. 10.* Ermy to God, which is tilth of spirit, is found in their very principle, which fills the Land, even the whole World, with mystical and littoral adulterers, and all sorts of abominations. Saints, are to live and walk in Christs Gospel-spirit, and suppress all the lusts and motions of their fleshy mind, in a universall obedience to God, on all accounts.

Verf. 13. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

The reading here, is a spiritual reading or understanding of the scripture. What is written in the Law? How readest thou? *Luk 10. 26.* These are two questions. What is written? and, how dost thou read or understand what is written? As the professing Jews understood Moses, or the Law, they reckoned it, against Christ and his Gospel-doctrine. We are Moses Disciples, say they, we know God spake to Moses: as for this fellow, we know not whence he is; *John 9. 28, 29.* But Moses, rightly understood, was for Christ, and condemned them. *John 5. 45.* Timothy was to attend on Christ, in reading the Scriptures, for the more full and clear discovery of his mind, therein, to him, and mysteries of his Kingdom. His Gospel-spirit, that gave it, is the only opener and unlocker of the Scriptures. The Scripture is interpretable, in its true reach and full signincancy, only by that spirit that gave it. It is of no private interpretation. The spirit of man, in the highest wisdom and light of a first covenant righteous life, is but that private spirit, or naturall man, that can neither receive or discern the spiritual things, myste-ies, or sense thereof. They are all foolishness to him; *1 Cor. 2. 14.* But this private spirit, having long and generally been owned as the right undertaker, at scripture, the true Gospel-spirit is reckoned the bold, presumptuous, daring private spirit, and those that come with the words thereof, proud affecters of singularity and novel-ies, in contradiction to a multitude of Wise, Learned and Holy men, in several generations. Christs setting up a new intellect or spiritual understanding in saints, to see spiritual and heavenly things or truths, capacitat's them to receive his revelations or discoveries thereof. On the openings of this spirit of Christ, are saints to attend, in all their readings of scripture, as the infallible teacher of all truths, and only enabler of them, to declare the same to others, as true preachers of his Gospel, nited to edify their hearers, by exhortation, and doctrine.

Verf. 14. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery.

This gift was the grace that was above him, (as the *Ethiopic Version* reads) above all natural perfection of light or life; the life of Christs Gospel-spirit, manifested in *Timothy*. The means by which it came to to be, was by Gospel prophecy or preaching, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery; that is, of the Apostles, that were elders and pastors; in Christ, to his Church, sent in the powerful exercise of his spiritual life, to quicken up the same in others, by their ministry. This is recorded of Disciples at *Ephesus*, that had a seed of spiritual saintship at bottome, but, as to their present attainment and exercise, were under *Johns Baptism*, in the first-covenant-life of the Law. They told *Paul*, they had not so much as heard whether there were any Holy Ghost, or creature-spirit of everlasting life and righteousness, distinct from, and superiour to that state and life they were in. But willing they were to hear of it, and have the spiritual seed thereof quickened up in them, by *Pauls* ministry and laying his hands on them; *Act. 19. 1. 7.* And by this, he became a spiritual father to them, under Christ, as to *Timothy*, his son in the faith. In the right exercise of this spiritual gift, was *Timothy* to wait on Christ, for his farther dayly communications; and not neglect his fresh supplies, for a happy growth and proficiency therein. For hereby, would he be dayly furnished with new matter, from the true spirit of Prophecy, to instruct and build up others, in the same Gospel-life, by his diligent preaching Christ, therein, to them.

Verf. 15. Meditate upon these things, give thy self wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all; (or in all things.)

The things, he was to meditate on, were the unfearchable riches of Christs person, the sum of all divine and creature truth. And for this, he was to read and meditate on his written oracles, the scriptures of truth, as in their spiritual reach and significance, declaring all truth, in the unwritten, living word of God. *Paul* would have *Timothy* joyntly meditate on the written and unwritten word of God, as found in exact harmony, when rightly understood. For so only can his happy proficiency in the spiritual knowledge of Christ and the scriptures, appear to all, or in all things, pertaining to the Kingdom of God, the matter of a true Gospel-ministry. These are the glorious Gospel-things and truths, *Paul*, himself preached, at *Rome*, and other places; *Act. 28. 31.* He preached the Kingdom of God, and taught those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, even the unfearchable riches of his Glorious person, who is the fountain and sum of all Gospel-truths.

Vers. 16. Take heed unto thy self, and unto thy Doctrins: Continue in them: For in doing this, thou shalt both save thy self, and them that hear thee.

His heedful walking in a steady obedience to the spiritual truths of Christ, will preserve him from all sorts of enemies, within or without him. This will secure himself and Doctrine, from all occasion of reproach, under the protecting shadow of Christs divine and creature-wings, whose name is that rock or strong tower, into which the truly-gospel-righteous run and are safe, against all the powers of darkness; *Prov. 18. 10. Psal. 91. 1.* This meaning of the first part of this Verse is confirmed by the second.

For, in so doing, &c.

Be steadfast and unmovable in the work of the Lord, and obedience to his, gospel-truths, against all temptations to the contrary; so will thy own salvation grow daily more evident to thy self, and render thee more eminently serviceable to the salvation of them that hear thee. This will bring a good report on the Gospel-spirit of Christ, as the only teacher of universal obedience to the will of God; which no first-creation-principles can ever do,

CHAP. V.

Vers. 1. Rebuke not an Elder, but entreat him as a Father, and the younger men as Brethren.

PAUL here directs Timothy how to demean himself towards other Saints, in a suitableness to their several measures and growths in the spirit of Christ. A spiritual Elder or Father in Christ, by himself appointed a teaching Ruler over his Church, is not to be rebuked by his hearers, as an equal. They are to treat him as a Father, in a dutiful subjection to, and owning him in his place and office. Such subjection is, through him, paid to Christ himself. Paul, being such a teaching Elder, superiour in the spiritual knowledge of Christ, to young Men, little Children, and Babes therein, desired in his teaching and practice, to be such a follower of Christ, that they might safely follow him. And he required them to be followers of him; only, as he of Christ; *1 Cor. 11. 1.* If in a fault, he would be dealt with, and treated as an Elder, in a suitable decorum to the dignity of his Office in the Church. Secondly, The younger men, to be dealt with as brethren, are such as are of lower growth, and inferiour attainment, in Gospel-light and life, such

such as yet need the instructions of Gospel-Elders, Teachers, and Fathers in Christ. And such Elders are to own them as spiritual Brethren, of the same birth, extraction, family, and lineage with themselves; the spiritual Seed and Off-spring of Christ. Yea, and as such, that, by a farther growth in the spiritual knowledge of Christ, may attain the dignity of spiritual Eldership and Fatherhood, in the Church. Yea, and so may little Children, in spiritual life; or yet lower, Babes only, whose present attainment is but Gospel-light, called *A beginning in the spirit*. Any of these may, in time, grow to a fitness for spiritual Eldership and Rule in the Gospel-Church of Christ; as a littler Child, to a fitly qualified State-Elder, or Ruler. Paul then would have Timothy skillful in discerning, and wary in giving the distinct rights and dues to saints of several growths, in the spiritual knowledge of Christ.

Verf. 2. *The elder Women, as Mothers; the younger, as Sisters; with all purity.*

Not denying the littler truth, and decorum, in nature (as, nor in the former verse) the reverence that is to be paid by younger men, women, and children, to elder men and women, fitted by their knowledge and experience, to instruct them as to their behaviour; The mystical truth of all, is to be enquired after, and received. By women, here, is meant, as frequently in Scripture, the natural spirit or man, in either sex, which in the highest wisdom, best light and use of it, in first-covenant-principles, must be brought into a state of mystical old age, and decay, towards the death of it, by the demolishing work of the Cross, or new-covenant-spirit of the Gospel. The mystical *gray hairs*, or weakness, hereby, brought upon it, are *honourable as found in the way of righteousness*, through obedience to the Cross, causing the fruitfulness of restored nature, experienced in first-covenant-principles, to cease. Those then, with whom it thus ceases to be after the manner of men, (lively, vigorous, and fruitful, wise, strong, and honourable, in their own enlightened spirit and way, in order to their *increasing with the increase of God*, in a more excellent life and way of everlasting righteousness) are in their decay'd natural spirit, the mystical elder women, that are to be received and treated as Mothers, and the younger as Sisters, who, though also true Saints at bottom, as having the seed of the new-creature, manly spirit in them, do yet live in the youthful flourish of their natural spirit, in the first-covenant, and *knowledge of Christ* therein, but *after the flesh*, or in that life of the Law, he crucified in his own person. The mystical elder women, by their experiences of the spiritual Cross on that fading-life, are fitted to instruct the younger, as to the needful discipline of the Cross upon the same, in them, for their salvation. And they are to *intreat* and instruct them, as *Sisters, with all purity*, as shewing this way of the Cross, on their youthful natural spirit, the only means to render and keep them, by the progressive work thereof upon them, chaste Virgins to Christ, their spiritual Lord and Husband, in that other, more excellent life, he has raised their nature into, in his own person. This new life and name of Christ, received by them, will, in conclusion, render them unchangeably

changably pure, as he is pure, for ever. This is true purity, excluding all filth of flesh or spirit.

Verf. 3. Honour Widows that are Widows indeed.

A widow, in letter, is one that once had a husband, but he now dead, is left desolate and alone, as to the comforts and helps of the said marriage-relation. Yet, if a widow indeed, she will so remaine, in love and faithfulness to him that once was her husband. Such a one is a fit type of the mystical widow, here meant, of which an account is given, *Es. 54. 1. More are the Children of the desolate, then of the married wife.* This desolate, or widow, is one that has known Christ as a fleshly bridegroom, by his husbandly influence, rendring her fruitful in a first-covenant life. But Christ, as to this dispensation, withdrawn, and departed, and then moreover, comming in the posture of an enemy, with his gospel-fire and sword on the same life in her, he crucified in himself, she is brought into a state of barrenness, and desolate widowhood, there. Now, if she silently submit to all this, and run after or entertain no stranger or false lover (that offers to comfort and render her fruitful again, in the first-covenant-life of the Law, in her own nature, will and way) but wait the return of her Lord and Husband, in a spiritual and more excellent life, she will find herself furnished with both more, and an abundantly better sort of Children, or fruits and works of Righteousness, than the married Wife, with whom Christ yet continues a Husband, and renders fruitful in the first-covenant-life of the Law. This happy change of Life, Name, Husband and Children, will be matter of everlasting rejoycing to the widow indeed, that has refused any other Husband (in that life, Christ, as her first Husband is departed out of) and chastly waited and longed for his return in a better life, wherein to be her Husband for ever. These *Widows indeed*, are such *Chaste Virgins to Christ*, as *Paul* desired those might prove, that he had a godly jealousy over, lest the old serpent should wind them off, by his subtilty, to receive him as a Husband, for the setting them up again, and rendring them fruitful in the righteous life of their own nature, in unchangeable enmity to the Gospel-life of their true spiritual Lord and Husband; *2 Cor. 11. 2. 3.* In the same life he has set up in, for himself, he offers to set them up, and asserts it to be a state of everlasting salvation; as to *Eve*, *Ye shall not surely dye.* This lye of Satan, is the Gospel after man's own heart, in direct opposition to Christ's, that is and makes men, after God's own heart, with *David*. The true Cross-doctrine of Christ's Gospel, speaks death, to all Satan warrants salvation and eternal life, in. This spiritual *Circumcision* by the Cross, makes men ready to call Christ, *A bloody Husband*, as *Zipporah* called *Moses*, for the literal

Verf.

Verf. 4. But if any Widow have Children or Nephews, let them learn to shew piety (or kindness) at home, and to requite their Parents : for that is good and acceptable before God.

In the letter, here is a duty, that by a naturall tie and obligation, Children or Nephews are to pay those that have been the means of their bodily life or education. In the old age, decays, and wants of such litterall relations (signified by the desolate state of widowhood) are they to relieve and requite their parents care, in relieving and bringing them up. These Children and Nephews, in mystery and truth, are those workings and births of faith, in Christs spiritual life, by which the desolate widow as to all former fruits, and births, in the exercise of a first-covenant life, is secretly relieved and supported, till she partake of that new life, which fits her for an actual marriage union with Christ, her spiritual Lord and Husband. She is nourished in her wilderness-state of widowhood, by a food, secretly dispensed to her, and received by faith, through the mysterious operations of the spirit of the cros, that devoures and takes away her natural life and food in the first-covenant, and, at same time, gives her a better food, in such secret ways, and by such means, as are not seen or understood by her self, during her widowhood as to the first, and before her actual marriage, to Christ, in the second. Support she has, but what, or how, or whence, is a riddle to her own understanding. Thus was the desolate spirit of Job supported, all along his sore agonies under the amusing and not understood operations of the cros. The saint, when deprived of visible, perishing food, is secretly supported with invisible, never-perishing meat, from the same hand that took away the other. And this is the thing that is good and acceptable before God. For so he has the whole praise, of his saints support, and the wants of their desolate widowhood are supplied by the food of another life, which nourishes them up, for a better marriage-union with Christ, then what he has forsaken them in, which will fill their heart with joy, and mouth with laughter, for ever.

Verf. 5. Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers, night and day.

The Widow indeed, or saint, in the desolate state of the natural spirit, under the Cros, brought into the *House of mourning* (as to all her former riches, fruitfulness, jolity and mirth, in the first-covenant-house of feasting) looks not back to that, but forward, to a life, state or house of everlasting feasting and rejoicing; pressing with Paul, to those things which are before. She is dead in her love and desire to all others things; takes no delight or pleasure in any thing, but Christ in his spiritual life. She is dead to Christ himself, as formerly known after the flesh, a fleshly bridegroom, in his first covenant communications, life, and food. True saints, with Paul, own not such a state of their nature, in Christs own person, or any other mans, as a state of everlasting life; 2 Cor. 5. 16. They look wholly Sionward

ward, for their spiritual Lord and husband. They admit no lingering desires after, or glances back, on their former enjoyments under him, as a fleshly bridegroom. Satan lies at catch to gratify them, and become a false Christ and husband to them, there. Their mind is dead with Christ, to Christ himself, as to that life, out of which he is departed. They continue in supplications and Prayers, night and day, that is, alwayes, without ceasing, breathing after the approaches of their spiritual lord and husband, in a newnes of life, to them yet unknown. But the lord hears and answers their secret spiritual groanes, according to his hearing and understanding of their prayers, as, in type hereof, *Zacharias* prayer was answered, by the lords giving him a son, whereas there's nothing upon record, as to his praying for a son, *Luk. 1. 13.* The true widow, in her utmost desolation, and most forlorn condition, as to all other life or comforts, trusts in God, and prayes continually for the birth of the new-creation man child, in the life whereof she cannot but be everlastingly pleading unto God.

Verf. 16. But she that liveth in pleasure, is dead while she liveth.

Here's the Character of a contrary frame of mind, to that of the widow indeed, that in her desolate state, as to all the enjoyments and comforts of her first marriage-union with Christ, chastly waits for him in a second, refusing to be comforted in any thing, short of that. This contrary-minded widow, is convincingly shew'd and offer'd Christ, as a spiritual husband, in another life, and call'd to the same house of mourning, under the dispensation of the cross, with the other. But, in enmity to the crosse, and hatred to Christ in his spiritual life, she loves that life, he has left; lives, delightes and takes pleasure in that. So, is dead to, and mindless of her true spiritual husband in his new, Gospel-life. She turns from all his counsels, and utterly despises him, therein. The want of a true chaste love to Christ, as her husband in the first, is the cause of her refusing him, in his second and more excellent life. She loves the glory and advantages of her own nature, in the first: not his, in the second. Otherwise, in a like-mindedness and conformity to him, she would submit to the death of her nature, under his crosse, in the first, in order to be married to him, in his second. What he has quitted, forsaken and parted with, she would do likewise. But, she takes pleasure in the former life, which undeniably shews, she loved him, while a husband to her there, not for his, but her own sake, as enriching, beautifying and adorning her own nature. For, in his absence from, and known rejection of that first-covenant life, and total deserting of her therein, she still delights in that, turns from him in the second, in love to herself in the first. The business of the crosse, is to crucify this evil love, to the first. But, in perfect contrariety to his own exemplary practice, and command, she takes pleasure in the life, he is departed out off, calling her to follow him in his suffering steps, into the life, he is now in. In hatred to his person, in his own Gospel-life; and love to herself in her own law-life, her whoish mind and heart, turns to satan, who is ready at hand, with his offers, to build her up again and establish her in the righteous

life of the Law, and so, in unchangable enmity to the everlasting righteous gospel-life of Christ, and God. Satan offers to establish her, in the life, that is after her own heart. But she knowes, her true Lord and husband has left it. Thus, setting up for herself, in a first-covenant life, as turned by satan, into unchangable enmity to God and the second (which must needs be a state of unchangable or eternal death to herself) she is here said to be *dead while she liveth*. The same gospel-sword, spirit, or cross, offered to be brought upon her, in love, for her everlasting salvation, will come upon her, in wrath, for her everlasting destruction. In this first-covenant life, set up by satan, in her, *she has a name only to live, but is dead*, as is said of the Church in *Sardis*; *Rev. 3. 1.* Death inevitably belongs to first-covenant life, by an invincible and unalterable necessity (where ever found, though in Christs own person) from the changable nature thereof. Those that refuse a temporal death and loss of that, and themselves therein, under the cross, are sure to find eternal death, from the same hand. An unchangable marriage-union with the devil, in the first-covenant life, in unchangable enmity to the second, is a state of eternal death. Yet under all this, *such have a name to live*: 'tis but a name only, a meer imagination. But, satan will incourage, puffe and blow them up into a confident owning and styling themselves, the only true spiritual *Jews* or saints, when they are, thus, the very synagoge of satan, in unchangable enmity to God, Christ and all true spiritual saints; to the Gospel-life of Christ, and all the right words of *that life*. Thus, some in the Church of *Philadelphia*, are declared and characted; *Rev. 3. 9.* *The widow, here, then, that lives in pleasure, is dead while she lives*, eternally and irrecoverably dead, in Gods sight, however pleasant, jocund, alive and rich, in her own, or others.

[*Verf. 7. And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless.*

These things or truths, *Paul* would have *Timothy* rightly understand, and teach others the same, that both he and they, speaker and hearers may be found blameless, through obedience there unto.

Verf. 8. But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house (or, of the same faith, as the Syriac renders it) he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel,

These words have a literal and mystical meaning. In letter, they signify the duty, every one that has a particular family of his own, is called to. He is obliged to walk in the exercise of a lawfull prudence, answerable to the circumstances, providence has cast him into, for the maintenance of his family, or needy relations. In mystery, they signify a duty, the performance whereof is a point of spiritual faith, and can be done only in a Gospel-spirit. The obedient parting with all first-covenant-life, food and clothing, as fading vanities, is the only way of being provided with durable riches, and everlasting life, food and clothing. This course therefore are we to take, as the only provision for our own mystical house or whole persons, in every part of our beings, and to account it our highest honour to be service-
able

able to others; therein. He that does not this; *is worse than an infidel, as denying any such state of Gospel-life and Faith, and so casting off all thoughts or regard of it.* Those that have been convincingly shewed this only provision for their immortal beings, by Gospel-light, and hate, turn from; and deny it, they do deny and reject that which the faith of all Gods *Elets* is built upon: So, are worse then they that never had such faith therein, and taste thereof, as Gospel-light amounts unto, and gives; *Heb. 6. 4, 6.* Others are infidels, through ignorance: These, wilful, under a self-condemning light, and so, more aggravated guilt. They have *known their masters will, and do it not*; So are to be *beaten with many stripes.* To Whom much has been given, more will be required from them, and more stripes laid on them (for willfull turning from all) in larger measures of Gods unquenchable wrath, upon them, for ever; *Luk. 12. 47, 48.*

Verl. 9. *Let not a widow be taken (or chosen) into the number, under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man.*

A widow of 60 years old, having been wife but of one man, a professor of the Gospel, poor as to her outward concerns, and disabled by Age, to make provision for her self, by her own labours, such a one was to be taken care of and relieved by the Gospel-Church. And this was the appointed work of Deacons in the primitive Gospel-Church; *Act. 6.* These qualifications and circumstances of the discreet, modest literal widow, point out to us, the mystical, the natural man of the saint, deserted by Christ, and put under the sharp discipline of the cross, as to the first-covenant life thereof, wherein Christ was once a husband to her. But, ceasing from his husbandly influencings of them, there, they decline into a state of old Age, barrenness, and death. In this desolate state of mystical widowhood, and old Age, is a mark of honour, to have been the *wife but of one man.* They rest and cease from the labours, not only of the body, as observers of a literal Sabbath, do; but, of their natural spirit, in a first-covenant life, in which it has performed its appointed six dayes labours, in order to keep the true mystical Sabbath-day, the true Lords-day, in that Gospel-spirit of his, in which he will judge the world, and in which God delights and rests, for ever. The mystical wants of such widows, are to be relieved by the Gospel-Church, with spiritual counsels and instructions, for their support. They return not in their love, to that life, Christ has forsaken them, in. The true widow, knowes, that would be a forsaking of her first love. She resolves therefore against a second marriage, in that life. She likes her widowhood, better than any second husband, there: *Her house* or state of mourning, then to return into the first-covenant house of feasting, where she knowes, she shall never meet with her first husband, more. She is well aware, that had it been her true concern, to remain in the said life, as her true blessedness, her first husband would never have left it. All Satans courtships and addresses to flatter her back, prevail not with her, for any lingering desires or love-glances, that way. She admits no treaties with this other man, the man of sin, that would woo her back into his worldly life and dominion. All the

kingdoms of this world and glory of them, all humane and angelical, all visible or invisible excellencies, wisdom, righteousness, and glories, in the whole naturall, or first creation-world, can't bribe her off from her love to her first husband, in another, more excellent life. Who ever she marry in the former life, that her first husband has forsaken for ever, she knows, must be some other man. Into this snare of the devil, are all wanton, unchaste mystical widows brought, to their certain and irrecoverable ruine. But the chaste widow observes the prohibition of Christs spiritual Law, for ever marrying another husband, in the life of the Law, her first is departed out of. She chastly waites her first husbands return to her, in a better life, though at present, experiencing nothing but barrenness and want, in her desolate mystical widowhood and old Age. Such widows deserve the care of the mystical Deacons of Christ spiritual Church, the good Angels, who are charged to keep them, in all their wayes of obedience to Christ, as ministring spirits, sent by him, to minister for them, who shall be heirs of salvation; *Psal. 91. 11. Heb. 1. 14.* They minister and hand to them that living Manna, Angels bread, or never-perishing meats, suted to build them up into the everlasting, spiritual, Gospel-life of Christ, their true husband. Thus are these mystical poor and needy widows, nourished in the wilderness-state of their own barren and desolate nature (having no life, food or strength in a first covenant state, left them) till their true lord thinks fit to return to them, in a second, and take them into actual marriage-union with him, there, by which they will be possessed of the unspeakable riches of his glorious person: This get they, by having quitted their own old life, name and will, to bear the new name, and live in the will of their spiritual lord and husband, for ever, in which only they can bring forth fruit unto God, offer up spiritual sacrifices of praise to him, and be truly blessed in their deeds, for evermore; *1 Pet. 2. 5.*

John. 1. 35.

Verf. 10. Well reported of for good works, if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saines feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.

Here is a farther account of the qualification and duty of the literal widow, in reference to God, her own family and others. She is to be such a one, as has brought up her own children, in the fear of the Lord, and in their lawful and honest callings; and so, has supplied that place of her husband, which she was called to, by his death, whence the whole care of them lies upon her, under God. She is also to be such a one as hath exercised the Law of common humanity, and peculiar love to saints, as for. If she have thus been diligent in all sort of good works, and in old Age reduced to poverty, she deserves the care and relief of the Church. Every of these qualifications of the literal, is typical, to what is to be found in the mystical widow, that is a widow indeed. She is to be well reported of for such good Works, as signify her faithfulness in passive obedience to the work of the cros, in offering up her mystical Isaac, with Abraham, who by such a passive sort of good works,

was justified before God, and not by faith only; *Jam. 2. 21, 22, 24.* Such good works justify or manifest her true faith in, and love to Christ in his spiritual life; as also kindnes to her mystical children, the birth, fruits or works of her spiritual faith. And on the same account of love to Christ, is she ready to shew true kindnes to all saints, even such as yet are strangers and not brought into Christs spiritual fold, and universally, to all men in want, but chiefly to those that are in mystical affliction and poverty, Christs poor and needy, that are of a *contrite heart, and broken spirit*, as to all their own life, will, and strength. For this her demeanour, will Christ supply all her mysticall wants, out of his spiritual riches and abundance. The performance or non-performance of these offices of love to his poor and needy little ones, will Christ take exact notice of, at last, as the characters and marks, by which he will distinguish and sentence *sheep and goats, to eternal life or death; Mar. 25. 31, 46.*

Verf. 11. But the younger widows refuse: For when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry.

These are such, in mystery, as in the youthful flourish of their own nature, in a first-covenant-life, refuse the cross upon it, and themselves, therein. They resolve to deck themselves with the ornaments of that life, their husband, is departed out of, in order to be married to another man, in the same life again, which they know, by Gospel-light, will fix them in unchangable enmity to his spiritual life, in which offered to them. They put off the marks of their widowhood and badges of their mourning, under the demolishing blows of the cross (on that life in them, he is departed out of, and has abandoned them in) in order to be married again, in that, to the known unchangable enemy of Christ, in his more excellent, spiritual life. *Job*, after waken'd up into Christs spiritual light and life, acknowledged that in his confused-thoughts and misprisions of Gods dealings and intents towards him (under the cross on his former righteous life and state) *he had darkened counsel by words without knowledge, and said, he knew not what.* But, he said and did all, ignorantly, as was *Pauls* case, in his blind zeal for his own life of the Law. *Oh, said he, that I were as in the days of my youth*, in the fruitful flourish of my own nature, in the life of the law, wherein I had an over-topping wisdom and super-eminency; and made the right and faithful use of it, *in delivering the oppressed, &c. Job. 29. 15-17.* All this first-covenant life and wisdom, though most faithfully and rightly used, was Christ running down in *Job*, and stripping him of all his glory and ornaments therein, under the dispensation of his cross. At length, he abhors all that he had so doted on, in comparison of what he received from the same hand, in a more excellent state and way; *Job. 42. 3, 6.* So, *Paul* counted all, dung and loss, in the first, for the knowledge and experience of Christ, in the second. But these widows that wax wanton against Christ in the second, turn back in their love to the first, and so to satan, who stands ready to gratify and embrace them, therein. So, he finds it an easy task, to fix them, with him, in the first, in unchangable enmity to Christ, in the second. *He takes them alive thus, in the life of the first-covenant,*

*Rise
into*

at his pleasure, and according to their hearts desire; 2 Tim. 2. 26. The very ~~off~~, he helps them up into, is the snare he catches them, in; by which, he leads them ~~into~~ eternal death, with himself. He charms and lulls them into such a dead sleep towards Christ in his spiritual life, as to render them wholly mindless of any such thing, for ever after, save only to resist and oppose it and all the right words thereof. They become his champions and most giganick opposers of all Gospel-truth. The true saint is content to have this foe of his own house, or in his own person, that can joyn with satan in unchangable enmity to Christ, wholly taken down and extinguished in all the life and desire of it, by the Cross, and then all is safe. The wicked one finds no part, in him. But, the wanton widow, that turns away from Christ in his spiritual life, in love to her former state, by him deserted, satan presents all advantages she can desire, to her own nature. He offers to build the mystical Barns, or House thereof, greater; that is, widen her natural capacity, to receive his superiour, angelical excellencies, beyond what she ever experienced under Christ, himself, in the same first-creation life, while a Husband to her, there. He will furnish her with the wisdom and tongue of angel as well as man, a dexterity of intuitive discerning and expression, as well as organical conception and a sound of words; but all, in unchangable enmity to Christ; nothing of his Gospel-spirit, that's called *Love*, in her. She is willingly ignorant of the snake in the grass, the unchangable enmity to God, that lies under all these glittering first-creation-vanities. So satan bites her mortally, and steals his serpentine poyson into her, as, prostituting herself to him, in a mind of whordom and unchangable enmity against her true Lord and Husband. The death, Christ offers by his Gospel-Cross, to bring upon this widow, as to the life of the Law; the devil out of his bottomless pit of deceits, represents as the greatest wrong, imaginable, to her, even a plucking up of all her hopes of salvation, by the roots. He tempted Christ himself, to *pity and spare himself*, on this account, as to the first-covenant-life of the Law, he was born in. The womanish natural spirit in the first *Adam*, was thus deceived by him: but the manly new-creature-spirit of the second, could not be deceived into the transgression of Gods spiritual Law. No man, in the highest, single, first-covenant-wisdom, receives Christs Gospel-testimony of the second; Job. 3. 32. Satan comes from beneath, with words, suited to natures palate, and hath too general a reception. The whole world run after him. The wanton widows disloyalty to her spiritual Lord and Husband, by mystical whordom and adultery with the devil, once compleated, all the children, or fruits brought forth by her, in that unlawful marriage-union with him, are children of whordoms, though of the same hiew and complexion, to mans judgment, as the fruits she brought forth to Christ, when a husband to her in the said first-covenant-life. Then Christ, her true spiritual lord and husband (who had been her husband in the first covenant life, and she his widow by his departure from her, therein) convincingly shewed and offered to her, and finally refused, does utterly abandon and give her up as unchangably loathsome, and hateful to him. This comes the wanton widow to, an everlasting separation from Christ, and union with the devil.

Yes

Verf. 12 *Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith.*

Verf. 13. *And withall, they learn to be idle, wandring about from house to house, and not only idle, but tattlers also, and busy-bodies, speaking things which they ought not.*

Here is a farther account of these wanton widows, against Christ, incasting off their first faith; or Christ, the object thereof, convincingly represented to them, as their true spiritual lord and husband, by and in his own Gospel-light, which is called faith, and a beginning in the spirit. On this, the damnation they bring upon their own heads, by such aggravated folly, is undeniably just. Both Christ and their faith in him, are utterly cast off, by them. He has, for ever, forsaken them in the first covenant-life, and they, him, in the second; so are they never like to meet with, or see him, more, but to their sore disadvantage. For they are found, with devils, in unchangable enmity to that spirit of their true husband, in which he will judg the world. So, the eternal mystical death of their immortal spirits and whole beings, is inevitable, under the unchangable wrath of him that offered unchangable love, to them. And this final damnation, we shall find them yet more justly deserving, by the farther account, here given, of their unworthy practices. *When they have cast off their first faith,* and so, Christ himself, their offered spiritual lord and husband, *they do withall, learn to be idle, wandring about from house to house.* This practice, in letter, renders them that so do, a despicable and unworthy sort of People. And, much more despicable does it render these mystical wanton widows. For this *idleness and wandring from house to house* is a true character of their lewd and whorish frame of spirit, against Christ, that calls them to abide at home with himself, and not gad abroad, in their love, after first-creation-vanities, or any other lovers. But they wander *from house to house* in lewdness and idleness, seeking where and with whom to satisfy their lustfull, whorish mind, in all sorts of spiritual uncleanness. Of this, we find an account, in the Lords charge against his first covenant *Israel*, *Ezek. 16. 32, 34.* Here is an exact, lively description of these wanton widows, who (when Christ offers himself to be a husband to them, with this durable riches of eternal life) from *their weak and foolish, but imperious whorish hearts* (*Verf. 30.*) instead of taking Christ, with his unspeakable gifts in the second, they give up all his gifts and ornaments, in a first-covenant life, and second covenant light (figuratively signified by Corn, and Wine, Oil, Silver, and Gold) to Baal or the devil; *Hof. 2. 8.* So do they hire evil Angels, strang lovers, Christs unchangable enemies, to satisfy their adulterous desires, in mystical whordom. *And not only idle, but tattlers also, and busy-bodies, speaking things, they ought not.* This yet shews more unworthiness in them. They betray, reveal, and discover the secrets, their true husband trusted them with. They deliver up his spiritual convictions (the mystical spies, that gave a true report of the excellent and desirable-ness of his new creation land or state of life, to them) into the hands of his implacable

implacable enemies? So do they *ſpeak* and declare things; they ought not. In hatred, ſcorn, and deriſion to him, do they tattle, in an overly, ſlight, notional way, concerning his ſpiritual truths and things, by him diſcovered to them, rejecting and trampling them under their feet, in the very manner of their ſpeaking of them. And their falſe lovers joyn with them, in caſting contempt upon Chriſt, and all his offers. In and by all this, do they give a firm aſſurance and ſatisfying teſtimony to the devil, that they have for ever caſt off their faith in, and all their former love and obedience to Chriſt, to joyn with him in unchangeable enmity againſt him.

Verſ. 14. I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the houſe, give no occaſion to the adverſary to ſpeake reproachfully.

Heres aduice, for preventing the evils and dangers, incident to the younger widows. In purſuit of the myſtical intendment of this whole ſcripture, about widows, the marriage here, young widows are to be put upon, is a ſpeedy entering the ſecond marriage-union with Chriſt, in his Goſpel-ſpirit and life of everlaſting righteouſneſs, as a new root and ſpring of all their deſire, thought, and action. This Goſpel-principle is the only certain preventer of the marriage, in whoredom above charactred, and of all the evil practices, therein, with the miſchiefs and dangers that inevitably follow. *Paul* therefore declares it his will and aduice, in the infallible ſpirit and authority of Chriſt, that the younger widows, marry. Theſe widows are ſuch as had been married to Chriſt in the firſt covenant, but deſerted, for ever, by Chriſt there, ſo never to be married therein, more, unto any. That's the prohibited marriage, all along. Chriſts firſt-covenant ſpouſes, do not immediately on his departure from them, there, receive ſuch a diſcernable diminution and decay of the glory and fruitfulneſs of that life, as to make them preſently aware of his new diſpenſation, by the croſs, towards them. So are they in a dangerous propenſity, through miſtake, to receive another husband, that will impregnate and render them fruitfull there, according to their former experience, under Chriſt himſelf. This young, newly made widow, on Chriſts deſerting her, in the firſt marriage, is not to be flattered into a falſe comfort and hopefullneſs, as to Chriſts ever returning to her, more, there, but forthwith inſtructed and exhorted to wait for his return to her, in another ſpirit and life. She is alſo to be ſpeedily informed of the only way and means, and exhorted to ſubmit to the terms (ſeem they never ſo hard) of being married to Chriſt, in that other life. For in that new life, he will be an abundantly better husband and comforter to her, and ſhe bring forth abundantly more and better fruits, then in the former. Sins of all ſorts can recover and exerciſe dominion over her, after her marriage-union with Chriſt himſelf, *under the Law*, or in a firſt-covenant-life: *But under grace*, when married to him, in the ſecond, all his ſafe; *Rom. 6. 14* The Goſpel-ſpirit or principle of life and action, ſecures from all danger. Young, newly made widows, by Chriſts departure from them, are apt to reckon ſatans pleaſing offers to them of keeping them up in the fruitful exerciſe of that life, Chriſt has deſerted them

them in, a return of Christ himself to them, after a temporary desertion, for their trial; whereas he is departed for ever from them, as to that state. Satan finds it no uneasy matter, in this case, to 'passe with them, for Christ himself. David prayed for, and found Christs steady, *constant spirit* of everlasting righteousness his only security from all sorts of uncleanness, literal and mystical, *all filth of flesh and spirit*, too; *Psal. 51. 10.* No security in the first covenant, from eith^r. Those that fall into satans armes, for managing them in first covenant principles and life of the law, he will indulge them the liberty of returning into *filth of flesh*, also, and that, as the true Christian liberty, allowed them by Christ. This is rantism. Satan abuses Christs assertion, that Publicans and Harlots stand less prejudiced against the kingdom of God and right doctrine thereof, then first covenant professors, in holy flesh. Satan hence argues, that the righteousness of man is a greater obstruction to true happines, then common, gross wickednes. So turns Christs own saying, into an argument to run men back again into fleshly pollutions. The mystical young widow, as the only preventive of all this mischief, is to be exhorted speedily to submit to Christs way of taking down and spoiling all her first-covenant life, glory and comeliness, by his cross, as her due and right purification for a new marriage-union with him, in that spirit, which will secure her from *all filth of flesh, and spirit*, too; for ever. She ought, in this case, to own the friendly wounds of Christ, her true husband, on all her former life and delights, rather then the kisses or flatteries of satan, the unchangable enemy of Christ and her, that offers to keep her up in the fruitfull exercise of that life, Christ comes to pull down and destroy, as the only way, for her entering into an everlasting union with him. When fixed in this second marriage with Christ, the other things, here required, will follow, as certain fruits thereof. For, so will this first-covenant widow of Christ become the happy *Mother of many Children*, of fruits and works of righteousness, in the second; and will be a fit guide to her whole mystical house or person, in all the parts and powers thereof; in the gospel-spirit of her lord and husband, so as to take away all occasion of reproach to her gospel-principle, and profession of Christ, therein. By her willing *conformity to Christ, in his death*, the lusts of the youthful natural spirit are crucified, by which she was exposed to the tempter and liable to run into such spiritual uncleanness, idolatries, and abominations (if not also literal) as expose her and her gospel profession of Christ, her true spiritual husband, in all manner of reproach, from the adversaries of herself and him. 'Tis the strength of her natural desire, gives all the power against her, to world and devil. That, weakened, disables those enemies, in their practicings upon her, and when fully crucified and dead, all their tempting and alluring power towards her, expires and wholly ceases. The most charming desireables in Satans worldly dominion, are crucied to her; when she, to them. Till then, this second marriage-union with Christ be firmly contracted in the life he is risen into, (through her *conformity to him in the death* and loss of all he was a first husband to her in) She is in danger, by mystical whordom, of giving the greatest occasion imaginable, to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, if not also by literal, as in David case, *2 Sam. 12. 14.* The

very adversary that tempts her to such evil, will be the first accuser and reproacher of her, for it. This is the mystical widows danger, if she follow not the Apostles advice, for a speedy entering the second marriage-union with Christ, in his gospel-spirit of everlasting righteousness. Her absolute security from all evils, dangers, enemies, and reproaches, can be had in nothing short of this, which therefore she ought to use all possible expedition, in.

Verf. 15. *For some are already turned aside after Satan.*

Some, that have been Christ's first-covenant spouses, and then also widows, and, by gospel-light, offer'd the second marriage with him, in a newness of life, have turn'd aside (from this first gospel-faith in, or light of him) after Satan, who offer's to gratify their unlawful lust after, and love to that life, Christ is departed from them, in. They ought therefore, to hate and turn their backs on that life, and by a thorough-relinquation of all the fading riches and glory thereof, to the cross, become so purified according to the purification of Gods new-creation sanctuary, from all filth of flesh and spirit, as fitly qualifies them for the second marriage-union with Christ. So will his gospel-spirit and principle bring every-part of their mystical house or whole person, into new-creation-order, in a universal and unchangeable obedience to God, in all things, and absolute security from the Devil.

Verf. 16. *If any man or woman that believeth, have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the Church be charged; that is may relieve them that are widows indeed.*

All true saints, according to their abilities, are to relieve the wants of natural relations, so as to keep them from being a publick charge to the Church. Those only that are widows indeed, in a literal sense, that is, poor and destitute of friends or relations, and, through age and infirmity, disabled to shift for themselves, deserve the relief of the Church. 'Tis a shame to any, especially to believers, to neglect this duty to needy relations; widows or others, so as to suffer them to be a publick charge to the Church, when they can prevent it, by relieving their necessities. They are under a double obligation for this (in nature, and grace, common humanity and spiritual christianity) to such natural relations; as are also saints, related to Christ, their spiritual head, lord and husband. Their failing therefore, herein, will give occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully of their Gospel-faith and profession.

Verf. 17. *Let the Elders (or Presbyters) that rule well, be accounted worthy of double honour; especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.*

Two sorts of Elders or Presbyters, in the true Presbyterian Government of the primitive

primitive Gospel-church, are here signified by Paul; teaching and ruling Elders. The former were immediately anointed, qualified and sent by Christ, as chief rule in doctrinal matters, and directors of the latter, in discipline and government; but denominated from their principal undertake, teaching Elders, as giving themselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the word. The latter, were immediately approved and appointed, by the former, on the Churches nomination, in the spirit and authority of Christ, to be Deacons or subservient ministers and assistants under them, relating to the concerns of the Church, also. This we find, in the original institution of them, with the occasion of it, *Act. 6. 1, 6.* Their qualifications import a farther serviceableness in the Church, then the relief of the poor, as to their outward concerns, as above said, on *Chap. 3. 8, 13.* When some at Antioch, under the Gospel-dispensation, said, unless men were circumcised after the manner of Moses, they could not be saved, Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, that asserted this. But this would not satisfy, or end the controversy. The question therefore was carried by Paul and Barnabas, With others, to the Apostles and Elders, or teaching and ruling Elders, at Jerusalem; And there 'tis determined in the negative, on Pauls side, that such circumcision was not necessary to salvation; and those that troubled them with such words, subverted their Souls, and the true doctrine and way of the Gospel, *Act. 15. 1, 24.* The Apostles, or teaching Elders were chief in the determining of this question: but the ruling Elders assent, was also requisite and pertinent to the matter, in hand. But their peculiar usefulness in the Church, was in a subserviency to the teaching Elders, to observe their orders, relating to the discipline of the Church. The teaching Elders, though also highest rulers in the Church, are denominated from the chief branch of their office; and the other, by way of distinction, ruling Elders, though also a teaching and instructing others (and so a fitting them to receive the stronger meat, or higher spiritual counsel from the teaching Elders) lay not out of the compass of their office. But their office was limited principally to ruling, and the others character'd by teaching. The Elders that rule well, are worthy of double honour. For the diligent discharg of their office, as faithfull observers of Christs orders, for the discipline of his Church, they deserve an additional honour, to that which belongs to the dignity of their place, as rulers, by the will and appointment of Christ. Especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. Teaching Elders, to the dignity of whose office, belongs a higher honour, by the faithfull discharg of that office, deserve the doubling of that honour upon them, from their hearers; A specialty of double honour belongs to them, beyond the other. And herein, to Paul, however mean and contemptible in his outward circumstances, speech, and person, he seemed to his hearers (2 Cor. 10. 10.) did this chief double honour belong, beyond other Apostles or teaching Elders, as labouring in his Gospel-ministry more abundantly than they all, through the extraordinary grace of God which was with him; 1 Cor. 15. 10. All true Gospel-teachers, do, with Paul, preach Christ, testifying the things or truths, concerning his sufferings in our flesh, and kingdom in his spirit; not in the fallible words of mans highest wisdom, but demonstration of Christs spirit and power;

power ; that their hearers faith may not stand in the wisdom of man, or be grounded on the words or doctrine of that wisdom, but in the power of God, as founded on the words of his wisdom, which the holy ghost, or Gospel-spirit of Christ, in them, teaches. And, for this, are they worthy of double honour, in the sense above-expressed, as thus rightly labouring in the doctrine of the word of God.

Verf. 18. For the Scripture saith, thou shalt not muzzle the Ox that treadeth out the corn ; and the labourer is worthy of his reward.

Heres a reason why such double honour of both reverence and mainteance also, should be paid to teaching and ruling Elders, in proportion to their distinct office, and respective well-management of each, relating both to the spiritual and outward concerns of the Church. Those that open the Letter of Scripture (and from under the husk thereof, fetch out the true spiritual wheat, into view, the spiritual truth and mystery, that is salvation to the obedient receivers thereof) are figured by the Ox that treadeth, or thresheth, out the corn, for the life and food of mans body. The Gospel-truths of the written word, are the Gospel things in the unwritten word of God, the spiritual blessings from his heavenly place, or state of life, that are the appointed food for saints to feed on ; the never-perishing meats, for the nourishing, edifying or building men up, into eternal life. They that faithfully discharge this office, deserve the double honour of due reverence and relief of their outward wants, that they be not strained or interrupted in their Gospel-ministry, by care about their own or others outward concerns. Yet, Paul himself, that had a-bundance of Gospel-converts from Jerusalem to Illyrium, in the Greek and Asiatick Citys, and at Rome, was put upon labouring with his hands, to supply his own and others wants of that kind, though he had declared to them the whole counsell of God, about the salvation of man, *Act. 20. 26, 35.* But having learned to want or abound, on all accounts (*Phil. 4. 12.*) He gloried and rejoiced in all sorts of distress, *2 Cor. 12. 10, 11.* Literal Money, or outward relief is plentifully parted with for that which is not true Gospel-bread of everlasting life, but only the perishing food or Law-bread of a perishing, first-covenant life ; *Es. 55. 2.* Gospel Bread or doctrine, is not, at all, pleasing to man, at best. It comes with fire and sword on all, that man, in the most righteous life of his own nature, depends on, for salvation. Christ himself, so displeased such, that they blasphemed and crucified him. And the servant is not better then his lord. If Paul had pleased such righteous men, in holy flesh, he had not been the servant of Christ, in his holy Gospel-spirit, *Gal. 1. 10.* The teachers and hearers of a first-covenant Gospel, for salvation, are the blind leaders and followers that under satans conduct are running into his bottomles pit of deceipts. These Gospel-usurpers, thrust Christs Gospel, clear out of doors, excluding all the words thereof, from any hearing, as much as in them lies. The spiritual saint has no remedy, but with his marred visage, as to all first-covenant life, saith shows in holy flesh, image of the earthy (though all glorious within, in the image of the heavenly, and spiritual life, yet hid with Christ in God)

but

but to bear the reproach of Christ with Paul, from the wise, strong, and honourable in Christ (as to visible saintship, in first-covenant life) as fools, weak, and despicable, 1 Cor. 4. 8. 10. When Christ shall appear, and they with him, at the manifestation of the sons of God, in the visibility of spiritual life and Glory, all the reproach and shame will be laid at the others door; *Eph. 6. 5.* As to Gospel-truths, the generality of heathens, in the dark, corrupt spirit of nature, with Gallio, care for none of those things. The main bulk of professors of Christ, as by him made rich, full, wise, strong, and honourable, in the restored righteous first-covenant life of their nature, and resting confident there, for salvation; They, of all men, detest all the words of Christs Gospel, and reckon those that bring such words to their ears, the worst of malefactors, *not fit to live any longer, Act. 22. 22.* By this, though their feet ought to be reckoned beautiful, and though they deserve double honour, is it not easy to guess, what entertainment they are like to find, in this world? But great is their reward, in Heaven (*Mat. 5. 11, 12.*) and great is their spiritual rejoicing, in the midst of all this usage, on earth, also; *Act. 5. 41.* This has been the hating, persecuting trade of the first-covenant worshipper, towards the second, from Cain, downwards, in their holy flesh, against all true spiritual Abels, in Christs holy Gospel-spirit, from the beginning to the ending of this world, the perioding of mans day and satans reign; *Gal. 4. 29.* Tis all one uniform work and thing, however unperceived, or unconsidered. Christ himself, with all his true prophets, and apostles, have been thus handled by a fleshly Israel, or first-covenant saints, among Jew or Gentile. The first-covenant spirit, corrupting and sowing into an enmity against the second, is the same heaven in our gospel-day with that of the Pharisees, in their law-day. The higher dispensation, we are under, aggravates the sin. The apostles, sent by Christ, when a fleshly bridegroom to them, in the first-covenant life, were rewarded for their ministry, by men. But when sent by him, in his Gospel-spirit (*Act. 2.*) They soon found the case altered, receiving nothing but blows, as Christ had forwarned them. For, now they'll be reckoned the most criminal transgressors, with him, even by such, as before gave them friendly entertainment; *Luk. 22. 35, 37.* A right Gospel-ministry preaches death to man, in the most righteous-life of the law. This is reckoned a blaspheming or evil-speaking of the Law, Moses and God, as Steven was served, *Act. 6. 11, 13.* Though Christ and his Apostles did miraculously heal the bodies of men, this did not secure them and their disgustful Gospel-doctrine, from persecution. First-covenant zelots will on, in their persecuting enmity, even against Christ himself; putting him to death, that they knew raised another from the dead. At this rate, Gospel-preachers are to expect to be dealt with, in this confounded world, under the permitted rule of the devil, and his instruments of all sorts, amongst men. As soon as Saul, a legal-spirited persecutor, became Paul a Gospel-preacher, he was presently persecuted at Damascus, whither he went to persecute, *2 Cor. 11. 32, 33.* and *Act. 9. 23, 25.* Men love, with Ahab, to be soothed up by false prophets, which are many, but hate and persecute the true Micaiahs, who are very few, one to a multitude. The false are highly rewarded; the true, imprisoned and persecuted.

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They say to Christs true spiritual feeders of God, see not : prophesy not unto us ; Es. 30. 10. Had not true Gospel-preachers a known reward with God, they were of all men most miserable ; 1 Cor. 15. 19. For, though there be a due reward of double honour to them, by Gods appointment, from men ; Tis usually very ill paid. When Paul had urged this very argument about the Oxe, out of the Law, and also of the law-priests partaking with the Altar, and living or feeding on the shew-bread, with other things of the Temple, and that even so the Lord hath ordained, that they who preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel ; when he had said all this, he tells his Corinthian converts, he has used none of these things ; nor written them, that it should be so done to him ; 1 Cor. 9. 15. It were better for me to die, then any should make my glorying void, on this account. I have coveted no mans silver, gold or apparel ; Act. 20. 33. I am under an indispensable necessity of preaching the Gospel, and sowing unto you spiritual things, be it as it will with me, as to a requitall, in earthly. Yet, would he give that, and other Churches, to know their duty, and advantage in discharging it, on this behalf ; Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth, in all good things ; Gal. 6. 6. The free and bountiful communicating of spiritual, and heavenly things, layes an overweight of obligation on the receivers thereof, never to be answered or equalled, by earthly. When any discharged their duty, herein, Pauls rejoicing at it, was on their behalf, as a fruit of their love and obedience to Christ, that would turn to their account, at last day ; Phil. 4. 10, 19. Mat. 25. 34, 40.

Verf. 19. Against an Elder, receive not an accusation, but before (or by the mouth of) two or three witnesses.

Paul, here, in one particular, shews the great reverence, due to both teaching and ruling Elders, in the gospel-Church, from true Saints. No accusation is to be received against them, unless attested by two or three witnesses, for the proof thereof. For this, the witnesses must be such, as render the evidence by them given, undeniable. So much of the literal sense of these words. In the mystical, or spiritual, the two or three witnesses, whose testimony alone does make good a charge against such Elders, for any wrong word or action, must be the same, whose joyned testimony does ratify and establish every right word or action in their gospel-ministry and rule ; 2 Cor. 13. 1. Who are these ? Christ himself, and his Father. Thou bearest record of thy self, thy record is not true, said the Pharisees to Christ. If I bear witness of my self, in the single spirit of the law, that I am therein the light and life, that's eternal salvation to men, my witness is not true ; Joh. 5. 31. But, there is another beareth witness of me, the Father that sent me. And the works he gave me to finish, by the crucifixion and sacrifice of the life of the law in me, bear witness of me, that he hath sent me. The spirit of the law, in John, and yet higher, in Christ himself, does, in its spiritual voice, decry its own life, as that that's to be crucified, and testify the spirit of the gospel, to be that, in the life whereof, any can be saved, being that, wherein Christ is the living word and Son of God. So is its witness in harmony

harmony with the spirit of the Gospel, and the Father himself, with whom that spirit is in unchangable harmony. I know whence I came, and whither I go, saies Christ; ye, neither. *He came out of the spiritual Glory, he had with the Father, into the worldly, first covenant life of our nature. And into that, he returns with our nature, through the death thereof; Jo. 17. 4, 5.* This heavenly creature-life, he came from, and returned into, the Pharisees knew not, or owned. And this was the very thing, he witnessed, even in the first covenant life. So, his record therein, *was true. These things, I say,* said he, *that ye might be saved.* I witness, in my life of the law, that the light of life, which is everlasting salvation, is to be had only in the everlasting spirit of the Gospel, by following my suffering steps, into the death of that state, ye now see me in. In his first covenant life, he gave testimony to himself, in the second, as John Baptist also did, Jo. 8. 12, 18. And Jo. 5. 30, 37. By the mystical fire of his gospel-spirit, kindled on the earth of our fleshly nature at best, in the life of the law, in himself and followers, does, he raise it, in both, and all, into the everlasting life of that sacrificing priest. The spirit of the law then, in its spiritual and full testimony to the Gospel, with the new-creature, Gospel-spirit it self, and infinite divine, are *three witnesses*, that give a firm and unquestionable testimony to every right Gospel-word of teaching Elders, and against every word of mans and Satans other Gospel. *I am not alone*, said Christ to the Pharisees, *but I and the Father that sent me. My judgment therefore is true.* Christ, in our fleshly nature, declares himself, to be in union with his Root and Father, the infinite divine, and infallible new creature spirit of truth. So, in the life of the law, he spoke the mind of his divine Father, and infallible Gospel-spirit; that nature, at best, in the changable life of the law, must, in himself and followers, passe, by way of death and resurrection, into the everlasting righteous life of his Gospel-spirit. The infinite divine essence, or Father to Christ's comprehensive person, (consisting of the infinite divine form and suprem creature-image of God) does testify him, in his new creature-spirit, to be his *only begotten Son, in whom he is well-pleased.* By partaking of this infallible creature-spirit of truth, Paul became a preacher of the Gospel, and had, therein, the concurring testimony of all the abovesaid three witnesses, to all his right Gospel-words, which were only *yea*; and not as the words of mans fallible wisdom, which are *yea, and nay*, off and on, as a fit character of that dictatour; 2 Cor. 1. 17, 20. In the high authority of the said three witnesses, do true Gospel Elders preach Gospel truths. No accusation then is to be received against them, as preaching false doctrine, but by such as can make good their charge, in a self-evidencing harmony with these 2 or 3 witnesses. If the highest single, self-confident wisdom of man, made wise by Christ, in but the restored first covenant life of the Law, charge them with false doctrine; no evidence given against them in that Spirit and wisdom, is to be taken as proof. That wisdom in millions of men, is no fit witness or judge in the case. All the thoughts and words of that wisdom, are *foolishness to the Gospel words and wisdom of God*, and God's to that. If men, made wise, strong, and honorable by Christ, in first-covenant life and wisdom, undertake to be judges of all truth, Paul and

and all true Gospel-elders, with all their words, are gone, as *weak, foolish, and despicable*, 1 Cor. 4. 10.

For all divine and spiritual Gospel-things or truths, lie cleare out of the reach of that wisdom, shut up in an absolute inviolability from that sort of understanding. You assert and declare, but how do you prove it, that is, evidence to our understanding, that what you say, is Gospel-truth? Man, hercin requires an absolute impossibility, in perfect contradiction to the very letter of scripture, which asserts, that that kind of understanding, in which they demand proof, can never take the evidence. All the *deep things of God, and unsearchable riches of Christs person*, all Gospel-things and truths, that are obvious to spiritual wisdom, are foolishness to the *wise, strong and honourable first-covenant saint*, in his holy flesh, or righteousness of man, who yet is but within the sphere and compass of nature, the natural man, that can not receive the things of God, or his Gospel-spirit; 1 Cor. 4. 10, 15. There is no medium or argument, by which tis possible to convey the actuall sight of divine and spiritual truths, to natural understanding. The letting fall all that wisdom and understanding in the first-covenant state, under the crosse of Christ, as the very *partition-wall* between them and all such most concerning truths, is undispenfably necessary to their becoming wise, in the second. And so, all will be seen by them. *The wise in this world*, or worldly first-covenant life of his own nature, *must become a fool, that he may be wise*, in the second. Let man think as highly as he will, of himself, in the first, *God knows all his thoughts* therein, about salvation, *to be vain*, and false, absolute madnes and folly; 1 Cor. 3. 18, 20. On the other hand, self-confident man, decries all the right Gospel-words of Gods wisdom, in the spiritual saint, by lump, as a mass of follies and madnesses, *vain or lying words*, as *Pharaoh served Moses his messages from God*; Exod. 5. 9. Any man, that has not spiritual faith or discerning, and stands up stiff and confident, as a competent judg of Gospel truths, is such an unreasonable, untreatable man, in Gospel-matters, as *Paul desired to be delivered from the disturbance of*; 2 Thes. 3. 2. Such will deny all, the Gospel Elder asserts, together with every word and tittle of his proofes: not admitting his exposition of any scripture, for confirmation of what he sayes. So, the true *spiritual man* is accounted *mad*, and the *Prophet* a *fool*, and hatred it self; and that, by the very first covenant *house or People of his God*: Hos. 9. 7, 8. But, *true wisdom is justified of*, and will justify all *her Children*. No other witnesses are to be admitted, to attest and ratify an accusation, brought in, against Gospel-elders, as evil doers, but those which will justify them in their well doing, or faithful discharge of their office. *Pauls meaning then*, is, an *accusation against a true Gospel-Elder*, is *not to be received*, nor he laid under blame, unless given and attested in the self-evidencing demonstration and authority of that Gospel-spirit of Christ, that is in unchangable union with the very divine mind.

Verf. 20. *Them that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear.*

The sin, *Timothy* and all Gospel-preachers are publickly to rebuke, is, in general a speaking or walking unsuitably to the Gospel, they make profession of. Thus, *Paul rebuked Peter, to his face, before others, as walking unsuitably to the Gospel, and thereby leading others into the same sin; Gal. 2. 11, 16.* Peter had had a signal, particular warning against this mistake, in a vision, by which, sent to *Cornelius* a heathen Captain; *Act. 10.* And himself, with the whole Gospel-council at *Jerusalem*, had, in the holy Ghost, decreed, the quitting all former distinction between Jew and Gentile, under the dispensation of the Law, *Act. 15.* The superiour Gospel-state, life, and dispensation, intituled Gospel-Gentiles, to a nearer alliance and brotherhood with Gospel-Jews, then their own country-men, in the single life, spirit, and ceremony of the Law. For such were the fiercest enemies and persecutors of the Gospel-brotherhood, both amongst Jews and Gentiles. *Paul* saw other Gospel-Jews, carried away, by *Peters* example, in that unwarrantable practice; So, rebuked the ringleader in this evil and error, openly, before them all, for seperating from the Gospel-Gentiles, contrary to his own former practice, signall warning, and certain knowledg. *Paul* had the abovesaid 2 or 3 infallible witnesses on his side, authorizing him for that charge or accusation, against *Peter*, for the just Gospel-rebuke of him that was an Apostle and teaching Elder in Christ, before him; yea, when he was a persecutour of the Gospel. *Peter*, without any reply or apology, silently submitted to this just reproof, and obediently returned to his former Gospel-practice, with those he had misled by his faulty example. In such important cases, even teaching Gospel-Elders are to be roundly and freely dealt with, publickly rebuked before all, that others also may fear: Such rebuke is necessary, to keep others from the like fault, against Gospel-light. But should a Gospel-Elder, or any spiritual-saint (as to his words or walkings) be judged in any other then the Gospel-spirit of infallible truth (which implies and takes in the other witnesses that make up the two or three) he would be justified in his Gospel-crime, and condemn'd for all his words and walkings according to the Gospel. If the wisdom or spirit of man at best, be admitted judge in the Case, thus it would certainly be. But the true Gospel-Elder or any other inferiour Gospel-Saint, findes the wounds of a true Gospel-friend, on just occasion, better than the flattering kisses of the deceitful enemy of the Gospel and him, the fleshly mind in himself or others.

Verf. 21 *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Elect Angels, that thou observe these things, without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality. (Or, without prejudice; doing nothing according to natural inclination.)*

Paul charges *Timothy*, faithfully to observe all these truths, by him declared, with

with directions to him, for his demeanour and right walking, according to the Gospel. And, as importing the great weight of this charge, he pronounces it in the name and authority of God, *Christ, and the Elect Angels* (that are in unchangable union with Christ, in the said Gospel-Spirit of Truth) *as threewitneses by which every word in the ministry of Christs Gospel-Spirit shall be established, and all that is contrary thereto, rebuked and condemned.* In all this authority, comes the true Gospel-Elder, with the words of Gods wisdom and spirit, to his hearers, which ought, most readily, to be embraced by all true Gospel-Saints. *Paul, in a union of mind with God, Christ, and the Elect Angels, charges Timothy to receive his Instructions, without preferring one truth before another, through partiality, but yielding a universal obedience to all, without any dispute, demurre, doubt, or question.* He must not *consult flesh and blood,* or listen to the reasonings of the natural mind, in himself or others, that's but Candle-light; but walk in the Sun-light of Christs Gospel-spirit, as born thereof, and so a true Child of light. *This will teach him all things, and lead him into all truth; Jo. 2. 27. and Jo. 16. 13.* Mans wisdom is the dark scrupler, and questioner of all Gospel-truth. The new spirituall intellect readily embraces all, at first hearing. The spirit of God sets at nought, mans foolish wisdom, as pretending to an umperage, in determining Gospel-matters. *Where is the wise? where is the disputer of this world, that denies all the doctrine, life, and spirit of the next, in and by which, Christ will, at last, judg this? He will destroy all this perishable wisdom, and bring to nothing all this understanding of the prudent; 1 Cor. 1. 19, 20.* He will make all these presumptuous Judges of Gospel-religion, *fools, and cover their faces with shame and confusion, for ever, for their arrogance.* If the natural spirit or wisdom of man, in saints themselves, be admitted, as an accuser or Judg in Gospel-matters, it will turn all upside down, justify Gospel-crimes, and condemn the truth. That is satans party, even in the saint. It will be partiall, in the obedience that is to be given to God, as in *Saul.* Gods wisdom was for destroying the *Amalekites* and all their Cattel: His wisdom was for sparing the best, and that, he followed. In his apology to *Samuel,* he unawares condemned himself, yet confidently asserted, he had obeyed the voice of the Lord. He sayes, *he had spared only the chief of the things, which should have been utterly destroyed. 1 Sam. 15. 20, 21.* And this was a type of what *Saul* also did in mystery, and thousands, with him, that are willing to run down the vile affections of the corrupt spirit of nature, in them, but spare the righteous state thereof, and fruits brought forth therein, the best of the Cattel, in all which, still, *they are but as the Beasts that perish; Psal. 49. 12.* These therefore, are not to be kept alive, in rebellion against the Gospel-sword or Cross of Christ, and all his Gospel-truths, through the witchcrafts of this worlds fading glory in holy flesh, which the *Galatians* were found guilty of, under Gospel-light. Thus, Gods fleshly *Israel* preferred the leaking vessel of their own nature, with its fading waters of a first covenant life, to Christs Gospel-spirit, the fountain of living waters. They would not obey the Lord, according to his mind and understanding of his Oracles by *Moses* and the *Prophets,* but were cleave to their own short sighted-wisdom, in the first covenant,

which they preferred to Gods, in the infallible spirit of the second, which rightly judges all natural or first-creation excellencies, fading flowers and perishing vanities, that mans wisdom confidently sets up in, for salvation. This will be found a fore mistake, when *God is judge himself*. Mans wisdom sets up the letter of scripture and his obedience thereto, in his own renewed spirit, which is but letter, too, (the oldnes of the letter, the renewed old man) to fight against the Gospel-spirit and spiritual sense of all scripture. And this spirit in true saints, is the only infallible seer, teacher, and doer of the whole will and counsell of God. The following words do also seem to intimate in these, a not preferring one person before another, through partiality or natural inclinations, but according to their spiritual proficiency, growths, and attainments, in Gospel-life and light.

Verf. 22. Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partakers of other mens sins; keep thy self pure.

If this *laying hands suddenly on no man*, relate to the laying on the hands of the Presbytery, by way of confirmation to any office of Gospel-Eldership, in the Church of Christ, it imports the due consideration, Gospel-Elders ought to take of the truth of Gospel-life and light in them, and their growths therein, that fit them for such spiritual Eldership. For if they prove unmeet for such office, it will reflect disparagement, on that infallible spirit, in which Gospel-Elders pretend to make their judgment of such persons, before the laying on of their hands, as a Gospel Ordinance; *Act. 6. 6*. In this sence, this advice seemes to look back, to *Chap. 3. 6*, against the making such a novice, a Church-Elder, as may be lifted up with Pride, and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Such mistake would indeed evidence, they made not their judgment of such persons, in Christs infallible Gospel-spirit, but their own private natural spirit, which judges not as God judges. Even Samuels hasty humane judgment was reprov'd, when he looked on *Eliab*, the eldest son of *Jesse*, as the man designed by God, for King of *Israel*; Saying, surely the Lords annointed is before him. Look not on his countenance or height of his stature, says God. I have refused him. I see not as man sees. Man looks on the outward appearance; I, on the heart. Six other sons are presented before Samuel, and all refused. At length *David*, the youngest of all, is fetched from the Sheep; *Arise, annoint him, says the Lord, this is he, a man after my own heart*, as having my own spirit of infallible truth in him (*1. Sam. 16. 6, - 13.*) By which he spake, *2 Sam. : 23. 2*. This example shews, that even those who are furnished with the light and wisdom of Gods spirit, having yet something of their own uncrucified fleshly or natural mind, about them, are liable to mistake, and make a wrong judgment of persons and things. And so come they to partake of other mens sins, as sharing in the guilt of such unmeet persons failings in the office, to which by them appointed. In another sence of this scripture, the Apostles advice may seem to import, that though Gospel-teachers are to witness against all sin, in all men, yet should they not lay hands suddenly on any man, that is, not come forth in the rash, hasty

zeal, incident to the natural spirit, but in the self-evidencing wisdom, gentleness and meekness of the spirit of Christ, for the rebuking sin, in any. This is the only way to prevent their partaking of other mens sins, as they will, if they witness not against all sin, and that in a right spirit and manner, with all meekness; that is, in the gentleness of Christ's, not zeal and wrath of their own spirit. For this will render them guilty, as well as those they reprove. The wisdom and wrath of man never teaches, or works, commends or sets forth the righteousness of God, Jam. 1. 20. Gospel-Elders will thus contract a guilt, by their undue manner of reproving others, that are guilty.

Keep thy self pure;

By living, walking, and manning thy high Gospel-Office, in the infallible spirit of Christ, that is the certain finder out of all sins, in thy self and others, and the right rebaker thereof.

Vers. 23. Drink no longer Water, but use a little Wine for thy stomachs sake, and thine often Infirmities.

Not denying a literal sense, relating to the frailty of Timothy's Body; 'tis surely lawful to enquire into the spiritual things or mystical truths, figured by literal shadows, here, as in other Scriptures. Water in Scripture doth represent the first-covenant-life and spirit, with the things thereof, as of a weak, changable, fluctuating and unstable nature; and so in the effects and products of it, in man. It cleanses from *flesh of flesh*, but does not, at all, cure the sore disease of enmity against God, and his Gospel-spirit, which is *flesh of spirit*. This still remains as a mortal sickness and infirmity in the stomach, mind, or inward parts. So far is restored first-covenant-life, from giving or being *truth in the inward parts*, which God requires (Psal. 51. 6.) that it harbours in it, falsehood and enmity towards God. Paul would have Timothy no longer feed and gratify his nature in that watery, unsteady first-covenant-spirit and life, that does but skin over and hide this evil disease of enmity to God. It must be a better than that life and righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, that can intitle any man to the Kingdom of God. They were, in all that, the most signal enemies of Christs Gospel-spirit, and Kingdom. They did shut up the Kingdom of Heaven; excluded the spiritual, saving, kingdom-sense of all Scripture, not enduring any should mind or look after any other, save their accursed Gospel, for salvation. They compass'd Sea and Land, left no means unattempted, to proselite and fetch back others (that by Gospel-light were looking after the Kingdom of Heaven) to their confidence in *holy flesh*, or righteousness of man, with the bewitched Galatians. They neither entered, nor suffered others to enter. They decried all Christs Gospel, as dangerous and delusive Doctrine. Unstable first-creation water-doctrine, so generally carries it with men, that Christs new-creation wine or Gospel-spirit of the Kingdom, is, in a manner, wholly despised and rejected.

Paul advises Timothy to drink no longer water, the fading reliefs of this unstable natural

natural spirit, but of the Kingdom-wine of Christ, for the comforting and strengthening him in spiritual, Gospel-life. This is the only curer of all diseases of sin and enmity, the only *cleanser of all filth of flesh and spirit*, that will give a perfect soundness, a spiritual stomach, or sound appetite to Christs never-perishing meats, and living *Manna, the bread or food of Elect Angels*. This will render him thriving in the Grace of God, and cause him to *increase with the increases of God*, till he come to his appointed full stature of spiritual manhood, in the Gospel-life of Christ. Those that deny this new-covenant, Gospel-life and wine of the Kingdom, leave no advance possible for, or incident to men, beyond and above the life they were first created in (which was, and when restored by the second *Adam*, is, intrinsically and essentially changable and unstable as water) unless God should advance them into his very divine Life, and make them down-right Gods. A heavenly and everlasting righteous creature-life, man is capable of being advanced into. The fading glory and earthly image of God, in the first-created state of angel or man, are not advanced into the unchangable image and glory of God, in the heavenly creature-life of the second *Adam*, but are to passe away from both, by their death therein, to make room for the heavenly, in and upon them. Man and Angels were *made glorious*, in their pure naturals, by the first-creation. But *that glory is to be done away, as no glory to the second*, that incomparably excells it, and remains for ever, 2 Cor. 3. 10, 11. A state of perfect soundness, health, and everlasting salvation, is attainable only by drinking spiritual, Kingdom-wine. Man, in his primitive purity, before tainted with any sin or enmity against God, was in no security as to attaining Christs new-creation wine or life, or keeping his own fading old-creation-water of a first-covenant-life. This is evident by the irrecoverable fall of many angels in their own persons; and recoverable fall of all men, in and with the first. But men, actually recovered out of their fall, and *death in trespasses and sins*, into the life of the first *Adam*, by the death of it, in the second; if they sin against the Gospel-life of the second, *after the similitude of the first Adams transgression*, in their own persons, they become *trees twice dead*, and as irrecoverably gone, as the evil Angels. No place or room, is left for their repentance or change of mind; *Esaus Case*, Heb. 12. 17. Man, the second time (after all warnings and experience of the dreadful consequents of the first sin) exalting the fading life of his own nature; by the first-creation, against the everlasting righteous creature-life, offered in Christs Gospel-spirit, by a second; by this self-exalting pride, he falls into the same final condemnation with the Devils, or evil Angels, out of all compass or reach of the benefit of Christs sacrifice or intercession. His knowing wilful enmity and despire to the Gospel-spirit of grace, is the sin unto eternal death, that, nor Christ, nor saints are to intercede about, or pray for those they know guilty of; 1 Joh. 5. 16. This, men come to, by an obstinate preferring their first-creation-water, to Christs new-creation wine,

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Verf. 24. *Some mens fins are open before-hand, going before to judgement; and some, they follow after.*

Here's a sad truth, relating to the incorrigibly wicked, of all sorts, literal or mystical; as in the following Verse, a joyful one, relating to the truly, or unchangeably righteous. Of the former, 'tis here said, *The fins of some of them are open or manifest before-hand, going before unto judgement; or, as the Arabick; to their damnation.* These are the sins of such presumptuous sinners, as live in all manner of open vileness and pollutions, with literal Sodom, that the common light of nature (in themselves and all others, restor'd by him *that lighteth every man that comes into the world*) condemns them for. A resolute giving themselves up to these vile affections, and lowest sort of lusts and pleasures, common to brute beasts, provokes God to give them up to them, also, according to their desire. And then their scared and benumbed Consciences, cease, in great measure, to witness for God, against themselves. Hereupon, Hell breaks loose in them, and away they run, into the exorbitant brutalities, and gross uncleannesses of flesh, like a raging Sea, casting up nothing but mire and filth, in all manner of debaucheries, *running into all excess of riot*, without the least check or control, from their own or others Consciences. These must receive, with literal Sodom, *such recompence of their error as is meet*; and that is no less than *the vengeance of eternal fire*; as Rom. i. 26, 27. And Jude verf. 7. demonstrate.

The Eternal fire of Gods unquenchable wrath upon them, was typed by the material fire from Heaven, on their literal habitations and bodies. Such sinners have little more then the name or outward shape of men. Their manly, rational powers, that should rule their female, sensual powers, truckle under them, and in a serviceableness thereto, prog and lay about, to fetch in provisions, to gratify and fulfill the lusts thereof. So, the bestial powers, bearing rule in their perverted nature, turned upside down (on which, they are hurried, in the unbridled and uncontrolled exercise of their brutified wills) they may, from the ruling part in them, be, fitly enough, denominated Beasts. The man is gone. He has lost his power and rule. This sort of sinners carry Damnation, legibly written in their fore-heads. Their daring-presumption is sure to meet with a sad reckoning at winding up; from the undeniable righteous sentence, and irresistible righteous hand of God, upon them. Their short scene of brutish pleasure, in the lowest and most contemptible sort of vanities (the crummes that fall from Satans table, the gratifying satisfactions of the lowest appetites in man) will be paid home with, and end in, an eternity of woe and misery, beyond all conception or expression by the understanding and tongue of man or Angel. But Satan has othergetters diet then this, upon his table, for a higher sort of his subjects, righteous men, in holy flesh, cleansed from the fore-mentioned pollutions of the corrupt nature. He has that by him, that will fully answer and gratify their appetite and palate. And this will he do (if God permit) as his only way, to seduce and keep them off, from Christs new-co-

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*venant table and his never-perishing meats, his spiritual, everlasting feast of fat things, and wine of the Kingdom, signifying the divine and new-creature glories of Christ and God, joyntly shining forth upon blessed Saints and Angels, in favour and love. In such, their presence, is fullness of joy. Satan was at it, to prevent Christs carrying our nature, in himself, to his heavenly table, by offering him all the fading glories and excellencies of his first creation-kingdom or world. God has permitted him, with his evil Angels to keep up and make use of all the first-creation life, glory, wisdom and excellencies of their Angelical nature (in which, superiour to humane, at best) as turned into unchangable enmity to God, and the second. By this means, are they fitted and furnished, to countenance, gratify, and please first-covenant Saints, in holy flesh, with more than their hearts can wish, by communicating their superiour Angelical glories and wisdom to them, in order to lodg them, with themselves, there, in unchangable enmity to God. And thus does Satan make them the highest ranke of his loyal subjects and darling friends, in union of mind with him, to oppose the Gospel-spirit and Kingdom of Christ. In distinction from the abovesaid daring presumptuous sinners (indulging their polluted nature in its brutish liberties, and noisom Lusts, which sink them into everlasting perdition and destruction) here are another sort of sins and sinners, that are called, in scripture, *hidden works and workers of dishonesty and darknes*. This mysterious sort of sinners, in the form of *godliness*, will be found guilty of spiritual uncleaneesses, adulteries and idolatries, in enmity to the power thereof, in a fixed union of mind with the Devil. This latter sort of sinners against Christ, and most usefull subjects of Satan, passe in mans day, or judgment of his best and highest wisdom, for the only Saints and visible Church of Christ, who throw Christ himself and all his true Gospel-Saints out of their Church, as blasphemous wranglers about the inheritance, or kingdom of God, and wanderers from all Gospel-truths. But, in the infallible light of Christ Gospel-spirit, and Gods day of Judgment, therein, all Satans and mans Cheat will out, and be discovered. Then will this hidden sort of *workers of Iniquity* be found the most criminal sinners of all, and accordingly dealt with. Gross, open sins, and prophaneess in the corrupt spirit of nature, *Go before men into Judgment, as manifest before-hand*, to all men.*

But these *hidden works of darknes* (all manner of *spiritual wickedness*, under the form of *godliness*, and fair shews in holy flesh, against Christs holy Gospel-spirit, and all the words, truths and things thereof) *will follow after men, into judgement*. And when detected by the all-searching light, and brightness of Christs second coming, or spirit, in which he will come, both they and their works will be destroyed, by the scorching heat thereof. To their great amazement and surprize, will these hidden sinners in mans day, have the worst on't, in Gods. The former will have enough on't. Both will receive the just recompence of their severall *errors*. A final sentence of condemnation and unextinguishable wraith will be upon both. Many of both sorts, passe currant, all along this world, in their severall or joynt outward and inward riches, flourish and prosperity, pleasing themselves in their various pathes, to the same *Chambers of eternal death*. In this world, God deals with friends as foes,

foes, and foes as friends. True saints, under the Cross, within and without, plagued and chastened every morning; while literal and mystical sinners, are oft gratified with more than heart can wish, in literal, or in *Laodicean* wealth, the mystical riches of a fruitful first-covenant righteous life, by them chosen, above and against the second; *Psal.* 73. Foes, receive their fading good things in this life, with *Dives*; Friends, their durable, heavenly good things, in the next, with *Lazarus*, and the first fruits thereof, while in this. Saints, after all their sufferings under the dispensation of the Cross, (in managing of which, Christ uses wicked men and Angels, as his Sword, to run down all worldly life, in them) will find their tribulation, on all hands, so over-recompenced in the unchangable good things of the next, that they'll reckon all their sufferings to have been but a short, troublesome dream. When they awake out of the death and loss of all their fading good things in the life or image of the earthly, they'll be satisfied with the durable riches they'll find in the life and Image of the heavenly Adam; *Psal.* 17. 15.

And the mystical as well as literal *Dives*, or rich man, will, at last, find all his fading treasure and prosperity in this world, a Dream. For, when Christ awakes, or comes forth in his heavenly creature-image of God, He will despise or destroy their earthly, and all the appurtenances thereof, or works done therein, *Psal.* 73. 20. Then the true *Lazarus's* shall be comforted, and they tormented, for ever, *Luk.* 16. 25. There is, then, no knowing Gods love or hatred by all that is before us, in this world, as to Gods dealing with men. He that can heap up riches, literal or mystical, and do well to himself, he hugs and blesses himself in his delusion, and others will praise and commend him for so doing: but God abhorres him. This mares all, *Psal.* 10. 3. and, 49. 18, 19. Now, as some mens sins are open, before hand, so are they sometimes signally judged and punished before hand (or, before the great and terrible day) as a warning-piece to others. Thus *Sodom* was made an example, to terrify others from the like exorbitant madneses, least they partake of their plagues, in a like execrable exit out of this world. So *Corah*, with his presumptuous fellow-rebels, died not the common death of all men. God gave a visible decision of his controversy against them, by avenging the quarrel of his new and everlasting covenant spirit, against which they rebelled. The unusuall Exit of these mystical *Sodomites*, with the literal, out of this world, manifested the remarkable wickedness, and misdemeanour of both, in it.

Verf. 25. Likewise also the Good works of some are manifest before-hand, and they that are otherwise, cannot be hid.

Some Saints have been so eminent in the marks of the dying of the Lord Jesus, on their mortal flesh (or natural spirit and man) and so signally fruitful in the life and activity of their spiritual, as to manifest to others, before-hand, what they are, and how they shall speed, when they appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. Other spiritual Saints, in whom the tyde runs high and strong, as to the life, power and activity of their natural spirit (not being so powerfully death-struck by the

Cross,

Cross, nor bearing such deep discernable marks of their conformity with Christ in his death, as the other; the life, activity and fruits of their spiritual man, run proportionably very low, and are so small and obscure, as to be reckoned hid. But cannot be altogether hid, to themselves, here; and *shall be manifested to all, before the judgment seat of Christ*, hereafter. Let us more particularly consider both these matters; and first, the good works that are manifest before-hand. These are of two sorts, death-works and life-works, both demonstrating the truth and power of their spiritual faith, as amounting to a fellowship with Christ, in his death and resurrection. *Abraham's* faith was an active co-worker with Christ, in a resolute carrying on the sacrificing-work of the Cross, on his mystical *Isaac*, or natural spirit, in the first-covenant life thereof, signified by his obedient resolution to offer up the literal, at Gods command. And this mortifying work on his earthly members and state of life, justified or manifested him to be a true spiritual saint. He looked on himself, but as a *Pilgrim and stranger, in the mystical first creation Land of promise*, or state of life. *He sought a better, that is, an heavenly*; Heb. 11. 13, 16. He, with *Isaac, Jacob* and other saints, looked on themselves but as *Sojourners* in that both literal and mystical *Canaan*, dwelling in moveable Tents and Tabernacles; ver. 9, 10. *They confessed themselves strangers there, to God and their true home or everlasting habitation, in the spirit of Christ*. The works, by which *James* asserts, *Abraham* was justified (*Jam* : 2. 21, 24) were so far from being those deeds of the Law, *Paul* excludes from any share in his justification, (*Rom* : 4. 1, 5) that they were death-blows on the very first-covenant life and principle of all Law-works. His works tended to the disabling him to perform one tittle of the Law, in the spirit of the Law, that he might perform every tittle of it, in the spirit of the Gospel. This spirit is called *Love*, (*1 Cor*. 13.) and said to be *the fulfiller of the whole Law*, in the comprehensive meaning and voice thereof, literal and spiritual; *Rom*. 13. 8, 10. The Law of God, in its full meaning, requires more from man, then, in his very innocency he was ever able to perform, in the active power of his natural principles and life. The passive obedience of man, therein, even to the death and utter abolition thereof, is the highest strain of obedience he can express, by the right use of that life of the Law, and of highest advantage to himself. Had God required more of man then he could perform in his first created condition, and not provided a Gospel-spirit and life of everlasting righteousness, to be partaken of, by him (on obedient surrender of the former) in which, he may perform all, he had been a *hard Master*, indeed. The Gospel-spirit of faith, by crucifying and disabling the Law-spirit of nature, in man, does not make void, but enables man to fulfil the Law; *Rom*. : 3. 28, 31. *Paul* throws off all trouble of dispute with the misjudging wisdom of man, in first-covenant principles, as an apostate from his former eminency in the righteous life of the Law. He appeals to the very death-marks upon him, there, for his justification against all their false surmizes. *Henceforth let no man trouble me; For I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus* (*Gal*. 6. 17.) *That the life also of Jesus might be manifested in my mortall flesh* (*2 Cor*. 4. 10, 11.) or mortal, fleshy, first-covenant life of my natural spirit, in which I formerly was

eminent. Once, who but *Paul*, in holy flesh, life of the Law? *If any man had whereof to glory, there, he more; Phil. 3. 4.* But after Gospel conversion, a fool, a no-body, there, to those first-covenant saints, that were rich, full and confident, in the life he had quitted, as *dung and losse; 1 Cor. 4. 10. 2 Cor. 10. 12.* So *Job*, when run down in his first covenant life, by the Cross, his three mistaking friends, (far inferiour to what he had been, in the glory, wisdom, and fruitful exercise of that life) censure him either as a hypocrite, that did but craftily dissemble, in all his pretensions to that sort of righteousness; or if he had been reall and hearty in that principle, then they judg him an apostate. Spiritual saints should not, at all, *passee for mans day*, or regard the strange censures and false opinions, first-covenant saints will make and have of the second. Secondly then, come we to consider those good works that are not so manifest before-hand, in such as yet, at bottome, are spiritual Saints. They may have something of Christs spiritual life, stirring in them though their active and busy natural spirit, in its own way, will and courtesie, hinder the activity of their spiritual principle, from such discernable peculiar fruits thereof, as it has in the former. *The hidden works of darknes* and enmity to Gods spirit, under all *fair shews in holy flesh*, shall be manifested at last, in the incorrigible enemies of God and his Gospel-spirit. And then shall the good works of spiritual saints (under what ever contrary appearances, and disguises, through the activity of their natural man, or through the marred village and spoiled state thereof, as to holy flesh, be brought to light, in open view. Then only will it be evident who are unchangably righteous, and who incorrigibly wicked (*Mal. 3. 17, 18.*) in the sight of all Angels and men, good and bad: And accordingly shall they receive their just respective recompents. Then will that truth be compleatly made good, *Esay. 3. 10, 11.* *It shall be everlastingly well with the unchangably righteous, and ill with the incorrigibly wicked, in the eternal life of the one, and death of the other.*

C H A P. VI.

Verf. 1. *Let as many Servants as are under the yoke, count their own Masters worthy of all honour, that the Name of God, and his Doctrine be not blasphemed.*

Servants that profess the New name and Gospel-Doctrine of Christ, and are under the yoke of a Masters will, are to performe their lawful service to him, with all care and diligence, as a duty, Christ requires, in obedience to him. They are to perform such duty, not with *Eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, as to Christ*, who will reward them. And, without respect of persons, he will punish a saint, that performes not faithful service to an evil, or heathen master; Col. 3. 22, 25. All this, *that his name and doctrine be not blasphemed*, or ill spoken of. He will have his Gospel-spirit in them, evidenced to be the best performer of all duty to God and man; That, which will make the best subject and servant to a heathen Prince or Master. It keeps the eye and heart, singly fixed on God, as under his constant observation, in all they do to man. So they'll equally perform faithful service to their masters, when absent, as if present; not in a mercenary, but free, unconstrained manner, as *Christs freemen* in the Gospel-principle of true liberty, though mans servants. And their Masters, if spiritual saints, though free, as to men, are *Christ servants*, 1 Cor. 7. 22. No saints are to be *servants of men*, so as to be ruled by the wisdom and will of men, in things pertaining to God; verf. 23. So much, of the literal sense. In the mystical, Christ is the master, who has been, in our nature, the exemplary and principal servant, under the yoke, shewing all other servants the right performance of their duty, in obedience to his will, by what he has done, in obedience to his fathers, under the Cross, to the death. *The same mind ought to be in us, as in him, so to suffer the death* of our nature, in the changable righteous life of the Law, as to be brought forth in the everlasting righteous life of his Gospel-spirit, that can never Sin. So shall we come, at last, to *cease from sin*, for ever. 1 Pet. 4. 1. When that, that can sin, is wholly gone, and we filled with, and possessed of a spirit that can never sin, for the only ruling principle of our life; desire, thought, and action, we are rid of sin, for ever. When Christ has restored in men, the changable righteous life of their own nature, lost in the first Adam (as a first benefit of the right death and losse of it, in the second) he thereby capacitates them for a new triall, in their own persons, whether by the same evil use, the first man made of it, they'll refuse his more excellent life, and so lose all; or, by the same good use, the second made of it, by death and sacrifice, save and gain all. We must hate and part with the fading life of our own nature, at best, in conformity to his death therein, for that more excellent life, into which he has exalted our

nature in himself, by a fellowship with him, in his resurrection. Herein only can we make appear we count this spiritual Lord and master, worth of all honour; by denying our own will, to do and live in his. Our wages is eternal life, in the spirit of our Glorious master. All worship of God in the activity of our own spirit, the life and way of our own will, is but the sacrifice of fools. The very principle, in which we perform all, must be the sacrifice, in order to the true Sabbath-worship of God, in Spirit and truth. We know not what we do; *worship we know not what*, till then; *Ec. 5. 1. Jo. 4. 22. 24.* In the life only of Christs Gospel-spirit, which is truth, can any truly worship God, or be saved. Men walk but as fools, in their own spirit: *never as truly wise*, till in Gods. *Eph. 5. 15.* Mans spirit, in its highest wisdom and light, is darkness it self, as to all Gospel truths and things. *Christs*, all light. *Ye were darkness, now are ye light in the Lord* *vers. 8.* Ye did walk in your own spirit: now in Christs. The *Corinthians* that were wise, strong, and honourable, in Christ, as to first-covenant attainments and communications from him, were darkness. *Paul*, who, as to all that, was a fool, weak, and despicable, was light and wise in the Lord, *1 Cor. 4. 10.* Christ took our nature and caused it to undergo all the hardships, to death it self, he requires us to submit to; and the servant is not greater than the Master. Let as many servants then, as are under the yoke, Will or Cross of Christ, on their will and nature, count this blessed master worthy of all honour, that the name of God, and his doctrine be not blasphemed. This master, by Gospel-light, convincingly shews his servants, the insignificancy of all first-covenant-life and righteousness, as to salvation. And then farther, that all that, must descend into the grave, as it did in him, under the weight of his Cross, in order to their ascending into the possession of that new life, their nature in him, is possessed of at right hand of God. Now, if in love to their own life, they refuse his, they themselves do blaspheme his new name and all his Gospel-doctrine, and give occasion to others to blaspheme both. But, if they hate, and willingly deliver up themselves, at best, in all the life and motion of their own nature and will, for him, they do evidence, that they account their great spiritual Lord and Master, worthy of all honour. The only way to honour him, in the right, obedient use of all their fading first-creation substance, life, and riches (*Prov. 3. 9.*) is the free parting with all, for his Heavenly, and durable new-creation life and treasure, which the young man refused to do, when counselled by Christ himself; *Mat. 19. 21, 22.* The wages abundantly surmounts all the hard service. Yet so a self-content, rich, and full first-covenant People of God, that have great possessions in their own nature and way, condemn all as fools and mad-men, with *Paul*, that listen to this counsel. The only right improvement of all mystical, earthly, first-creation riches, is the exchange of all, for the Heavenly. They receive their own again with usury, transformed by death out of changable into unchangable riches, durable substance, life, and clothing, of an everlasting righteous nature. Their whole masse of drossy Tin and reprobate Silver, is, by this means and way, turned into incorruptible new-creation Gold. This is the true improvement of all received by the first creation, according to the intent of the giver, to their uneverlasting advantage. Those that take not this

course, first or last, do give up themselves, and all, by Christ, given to, or done for them, in the first-creation, or restored by redemption; All first-covenant life, and second covenant light, into the hands of the devil, joyning with him, by the abuse of all, in unchangable enmity to their true Lord and Master. And this is the highest dishonour they can put upon him, which will bring everlasting contempt upon themselves, as vessels of eternal dishonour, under wrath.

Verf. 2 And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren: But rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.

Believing servants are to count their believing Masters partakers of the same benefit or un-speakable gift, with themselves, worthy of double honour, and of their most faithful service. They must not despise them, as brought into an equality with them, in spiritual brother-hood, but more cheerfully perform the duty of their inferior natural relation, to them, as more worthy thereof than other masters. For, they will be more just in commanding, being themselves guided by that Gospel-principle, that exc eds what the best morall *Heathen* or legal Christian are furnished with. In the Gospel-spirit, both master and servant will perform the mutual duties of their places, as servants to the great master of both, Christ himself. The servant, though superiour in the Gospel-life and knowledge of Christ, ought so much the more exactly to perform the duty of his inferior natural relation to his master. But what if a believing servant have not only an unbelieving, but unjust, troublesome, unreasonable master, that will not be pleased, do he never so well? In this case is he to endure grief, suffering wrongfully, and take all patiently. This is thank worthy, and acceptable with God. This is to be looked on as part of the Cross of Christ, upon him, who did no sin, yet suffered as an evil doer, to the utmost extremity, and threatened not but took all silently and patiently, committing himself to him that judgeth righteously, 1 Pet. 2. 18, 23. Devils and men, in all their unreasonablenesses towards saints, are used and over-ruled by Christ, to carry on the work of his Cross, on their own will, for their good. Christ himself is such a seemingly hard master, that when his first-covenant servants are never so exact and faithful in their obedience to him, according to their present light and principle (as *Joh* was testified by God himselfe, to be) yet he has something to say against them, and will be upon them with stripes, even to death it self. This did put *Joh*, for a while into a great maze and confusion, so that he uttered some unadvised words, which he repented of, when waked up into a spiritual discerning, that unriddled all. Let the servants of God do never so well in their first covenant principle, they must suffer what they reckon the utmost hardship and evil, therein, even to the death and losse of that very life, and all the riches and fruits, brought forth and heaped up, therein, as Gods most wise method and way, for their receiving a heavenly life and treasure, in the room thereof. Thus did Christ handle our nature, at best, in his own person. All these are the things, in letter, and mystery, Paul commands

Timothy

Timothy to teach and exhort men to, as the comprehensive meaning of these few words. For by the right, constant practice of these things, all occasion of offence will be taken from them that seek occasion of reproaching the name, spirit and Gospel-truth of Christ. So will saints evidence their Gospel-principle to be better then that of the morall Heathen or legal-christian, for performance of all sorts of duties to God or man. Hence will the spiritual beleever approve himself, best, in all relations and capacities of master, servant, parent, child, ruler, or subject.

Verf. 3. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholsom words, the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to Godliness :

Verf. 4. He is proud (or, a fool) knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof commeth Envy, Strife, Railings, evil surmizings ;

Paul here layes much weight on the due obedience of the literal and mystical servant, to his Lord and Master, in both senses, above-spoken to ; the former, figure of the latter. *If any man teach otherwise*, that is, deny the death of our Lord himself, as to the pure and spotless first-covenant-life of our nature, confining his death only to that of his literal body, (and consequently deny any such death to be undergone by his followers, as the loss of their restored first-covenant life, amounts unto) *he is a proud fool*, knowing nothing, nor owning one word of the Gospel and Cross of Christ. Such proud men contradict all the words of Gods wisdom, all Gospel-things and truths. They utterly deny the subjection, first-covenant servants are to pay to their true Lord and Master, in the second, even to the death and utter abolition of that fading life, to make way For his everlasting righteous life, to be set up, in the room thereof, in them. They deny any such death, in master, or servant. *I* was a self-reflexion in *Peter*, made him so ready an instrument of satan, to dissuade Christ from the surrender of that pure and righteous life of his natural spirit, in which a fleshly bridegroom and comforter to him. He knew, if all that must go, in the master, it must all be parted with, in the servant, too. They all thought *this a hard saying*. And so do all natural hearts in the best of saints, till powerfully convinced of the necessity thereof, and *glory that followes*, in a more excellent life. All that fixedly set up themselves in the first-covenant life, against their Lord and Master in the second, will be dealt with, in conclusion, as his incorrigible enemies. They therefore, that do and teach this, overthrow all the wholsom words or sound doctrine, of Christs Gospel, to a tittle, which alone is according to true *Godliness*. This work does the wisdom of man make of it, in all his pretended teaching of the Gospel of Christ and God, perverting all the words of God, into a flat contradiction to his own meaning, in all. So, the whole Gospel-sence of all scripture is decried and exploded, by mans (*Orthodox*) wisdom, as the most dangerous, heretickall doctrine, in the world. But true saints will *consent* to, and own all Christs *sound and wholsom words*, so as to follow his example, in giving up that life in them, which Christ Crucified in himself, and by Gospel-light, has evidently

for himself, as so, before their eyes. Gal. 3. 1. Saints can, only, by denial of their own will, to live in the will of their Lord, manifest, that they count him worthy of all honour, and consent to all his sound and wholesome words, the doctrine which is according to godliness, by quitting the form, in first-covenant-life, for the power of it, and righteousness of God, in the second. The servant, that in the first-covenant, sets up himself against the example, and command of his spiritual Lord, in the second, is an enemy to the power of godliness. Such are here asserted to be proud or puffed up in the wisdom and righteousness of man, against the Gospel-life of Christ and all the words thereof. And so come they to dote about questions and strifes of words, in an impertinent Logomachy, and unprofitable janglings, which produce nothing but envy, contention, railings, and evil surmisings, against the whole Gospel-truth of Christ. They know or own nothing at all, of Christs Gospel, but detest all the doctrine thereof, as absolute folly and madness. By priding themselves in the first-covenant life, against Christ, in the second, they side with the devil, in unchangable enmity to Christ, and fall into the same condemnation with him, under the final wrath of God.

Verf. 5. *Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thy self.*

The constant, uniform attempt of Satan, from first to last, is to prevail with men, to hold fast the fading life and shadowy things of their own nature, received by the first-creation, against the substantial things of God, offer'd them, by a second. He prevailed with the first Adam, to make this evil choice, with himself. He attempted the like on the second, first by himself, and after, by the mouth of an apostle; *Master spare thy self. Get thee behind me Satan, sayes Christ, thou savourest the things of man, in the first-creation: not of God, in the second; So, art for keeping up the former, in unchangable enmity to the latter.* Presently, on that passage, Christ preaches his Cross and death, on all that fading life of the Law and things thereof, in himself and others (that Satan favours, and would have spared) as the only indispensable way of attaining the heavenly things and life, he unchangably hates; *Mat. 16. 22, 25.* Christs Gospel preaches down nature, at best, into a broken, self-abased condition, by parting with all the fading things, life, and Glory thereof, as *Dung*, with *Paul*, for the more excellent Gospel-life and things of God. Mans and Satans other Gospel is for mens establishing and exalting themselves in the unbroken spirit, wisdom, restored life, righteousness and fading Glory of their own nature, as a state of everlasting salvation. *Paul bids Timothy withdraw from such.* For, their minds, being corrupted from, and destitute of all Gospel truth, they suppose that *gain is godliness*. Whatever deckes, and adorns their own nature, as the fading wisdom, glory and righteousness thereof, does, they are willing to take for true godliness, and therefore never to be parted with. All this is but the *form of godliness*, in the law-spirit of nature, in union with Satan, set up against the power of it, in the Gospel-spirit of Christ, and all his Gospel-truth.

Gospel-truths. Their minds being thus corrupted (by the same serpent that beguiled Eve, into an enmity to the Gospel-life of Christ (2 Cor. 11. 3.) represented, at first, in the Tree of life) They become directly satans anti-gospel, anti-christian party. When so engaged in his quarters, and backed by him, they do, under his conduct, by their *perverse dispositions*, give the highest and boldest affronts to Christ and all his Gospel-truths, of any sort of men in the world. So, goe they with their whole, unbroken, uncrucified naturalls, to the Chambers of death, while Christ and his followers, passe under the Cross, with their maimed, broken, crucified nature, into eternal life. Such loss is true gain; and the others gain, irrecoverable losse. For, though they *gain the whole world*, all the fading riches, wisdom, glory, and excellency of their own nature, *they lose their own souls*, in eternal death, and where then is their profit? *Mat. 16. 26.* When the son of man comes forth, with his Angels, in the spiritual-life and Glory of his father, all these glittering earthly first-creation-vanities, they have prided themselves in, shall be burnt up, and they rewarded according to their works, *vers. 27.* What pains do men take, in this case, to dispute and preach themselves and hearers, into destruction? The best wisdom, power of working righteousness, or walking righteously, signified by right Eye, Hand, and Foot, must nature part with, that man, thus *halt, maimed and blind* (a fool, a no-body, with Paul, as to the wisdom and righteousness of man) may in Christs Gospel-life, wisdom and righteousness, *enter into the kingdom of God.* But, if man will still count what is *gain* and glory to his own nature, true *godliness*, he shall not want for devils and righteous men, in holy flesh, to bolster him up, in this most false perswasion. *They'll praise and applaud him as doing well to himself*, when indeed, doing the highest evil against God, and to himself. For *when he dies, he carries nothing of his fading glory*, and mystical riches of his adorned nature, away, with him; *Pf. 49. 17, 18; Nor shall ever see light; vers. 19.* The love of this mystical mammon or fading riches of our own nature, in a first-covenant righteous life, *is the root of all evil.* It corrupts and bribes off the mind from the simplicity that is in Christ (2 Cor. 11. 3.) or, into adirect contrary frame, to that pure, single, chaste heart and eye towards Christ, in his spiritual life, man ought to have. Thus were the *Galatians bewitched*, with the fading life, glory and riches of their own nature, in holy flesh, so as to turn their backs on Christs Gospel-life, and holy spirit, with all the things and truths thereof. Thus go thousands, under mans and satans charmings, pleasantly, to Hell, finding no hard sayings, no Cross, no Gospel-sword or fire, in their self-pleasing way, that speaks war and death to nature, at its best. But at length, the self-same Cross, Gospel-sword or spirit, comes upon them, in unchangable wrath. This get men, by engaging in strifes of words, to maintain *the form of godliness* in their own nature, against the power of it, in Christs Gospel-spirit. They contend for letter, figure, and shadow, holy flesh, against, grace, substance and truth, in Christs holy spirit. Hence proceed their envy, and railings at all Christs Gospel-truths. These, *Timothy* and all true saints are to withdraw and sepearate from, as the most abominable and offensive to God,

God, of all sorts of sinners. *That gain to themselves, which they have counted Godlines, will be found their irrecoverable ruine.*

Verf. 6. *But godliness with contentment is great gain.*

True *Godliness*, attainable only in Christs Gospel-spirit of everlasting righteousness, by parting with the form of godliness and righteousness of man, in our own spirit, is unspeakable gain. It supplies all the wants of mans immortal being. It delivers from all evil, and possesses him of all Good. It consummats the utmost blessedness, incident to his whole being, rendring him an object of Gods everlasting delight, and God, of his.

Verf. 7. *For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.*

Here's a confirmation of the former words, that true *Godliness*, is the only great and certain gain. For, all things short of this, inward or outward riches, the *delights of the sons of men*, leave man as naked at the death of his body, as he came into this world. All the mysticall riches, glory, and flourish of his spirit, in the fruitfull exercise of a restored first-covenant life (being but perishable vanities, as well as the outward riches and concerns of his body) will leave him in an equality with the brutined fool, and common sinner of the gentiles. There's a *day of adversity*, written in legible characters, over against the utmost *day of prosperity*, in the perishable nature of all other things, but true *Godliness*. Nothing but that, therefore, with the durable riches, or heavenly treasures thereof, can stand man in stead, when all other things faile, and drop away, as fading flowers. All the mysticall riches, heap'd up in the most fruitful exercise of a first-covenant righteous life, will be so far from standing men in stead, at last day, that the *rust thereof*, from the corruptible nature of the treasures themselves, and blasting breath of the spirit of the Lord upon them (of all which they have been fairly warn'd) will testify against them, *Iam. 5. 1, 3.* This, will the twofold rich man, trusting in the outward or inward riches of this world, get, by following the counsell of their one wisdom, and neglecting Christs (*Mat. 6. 19, 20.*) And so, laying up for themselves, perishing earthly treasures, and despising his durable and heavenly. There's no ground for spirituall saints, that are rich in God, to envy either of them, in their utmost pomp, when *their Eyes stand out with fatness, and they have more then heart can wish.* For they live in the certain foresight, that all this will come to nothing, with them both. They are therefore advised, *not to be*, at all, appaied at, or, afraid of either of these sorts of worldly rich men, look they as big as they will, when the glory of their House or nature, is increased. For when they die, they shall carry nothing away with them: nothing of their Glory shall descend after them; *Psal. 49. 16, 17.*

Verf. 8. *And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.*

Man ought to be content with Gods appointed portion to him, in these perishing vanities, and *not trust* in, or look for more from them, then is to be found in them. He ought to regard them no farther, then as a present supply to him, in this world. All outward or inward riches, food, or clothing to body or spirit, in mans corruptible first-creation life and constitution, will vanish away. Tis the fault of the *Nations of this world*, in the corrupt or righteous life of nature, to look after, and lay out their whole care and love, upon a *life, food, and raiment*, that will be no continuing benefit to either. But the lawfull use of all worldly things, visible, or invisible, is only as a present supply to the fleshly body and naturall spirit. Saints ought, on no other account, to look after, or use them; but let themselves to seek the *Kingdom of God, and his everlasting righteousness*, which is true godliness, the only gain. This will be of everlasting benefit to their immortal beings. In stead of seeking after any perishing vanities, relating to the body or fleshly first-covenant life of the spirit, Christ absolutely requires the parting with the latter, life and all, and not to love or dote on the former, but be in a readines to part with all those things also (if called thereunto) for the only durable life and riches of the world to come. We must, in the required exchange-trafficke, part with our perishing law-life and riches, for everlasting Gospel-life and riches. Our keeping up the former, when called to surrender them, corrupts them and us, into an enmity to the cross of Christ, and his everlasting Gospel-life and treasure. Paul advises, here, to look for no more from this worlds transient vanities, literal or mytical, then as a present life, food, and raiment, and contentedly submit to the wisdom of God, that has so made and appointed them; as also to his appointed measure for us, there in, as our lot and portion, in this world. We are not to look on any such things, as a meet treasure or furniture for our immortal beings, but seek after Christs new-creature lite, of everlasting righteousness, and the durable riches and clothing thereof, which will answer all our needs.

Verf. 9. *But they that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtfull lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.*

Here is a littler truth; *he that hasteth to be rich*, resolves, right or wrong, to heap up to himself the outward and lowest sort of worldly treasure, relating only to the body, not only falls, but runs into satans temptations, hastens into these lowest snares of the great fowler and destroyer of men. And so, *falls into many foolish and hurtfull lusts, that drown him in destruction and perdition*. He pleases and blesses himself in his little crafts and projects, when God permits him to succeed therein, reckoning that, is surpassing wisdom, which not only God, but enlightened man, does evidently see and judge to be dangerous and destructive folly. His
foolish

foolish lusts are hurtfull to himselfe, most, running him, into everlasting perdition, in the world to come. And such are also hurtfull to others, in this world, whom they defraud of their just rights, and then deride them as fools that could be over-reached and deceived by them. They envy those that are above them, in the same worldly pelf. They despise the poor and needy therein, as either wanting their craft, or having more conscience, then to make such unlawful use of it, to deceive. Thus are they hurtful, and injurious, on all hands, to themselves and others. All the while, they consider not the woe, denounced from a sure hand, upon them; *Woe to him that encreases that which is not his, and lades himself with thick clay, enlarging his desire as hell, and as death, never satisfied. Hab. 2. 5, 6.* And he that takes this course, is infectious to others, as exemplary in his greedy hunting after that prey. So is he serviceable to the devil, every way, within that lower sphere of an evil covetousness to his own house. Envy him, that will. Pity, he scornes. But, in this short character of the littler covetous man, and danger of his destructive condition and way, have we the figure and shadow of the mystical covetous man, with the most sad and dangerous consequents of his course and way. *He feeds upon the forbidden fruits, and gratifying food of a first-covenant life; grasps after, and heaps up to himselfe riches therein, for greatning, adorning, and advancing his own nature, in his own self-chosen way, in rebellion against the more excellent life, food, and riches, convincingly shewed and offered him by Christ, in that heavenly state, into which he has exalted our nature in his own person.* The fading glory and *Laodicean* riches of a first-covenant-life the very wisdom and righteousness of man, are the snare, in which Satan catches him. *He takes him alive, therein, at his will; 2 Tim. 2. 26.* And this sort of Satans captives are so frolick, confident, and well-pleased, in his chains, that they labour, might and main, to lead others into the same dangerous snare and captivity with themselves. These self-confident rich men despise, as meer fools and no-bodies, those that have obediently, according to Christs example and command, delivered up all that life, food, and riches, to be melted down and consumed by the Gospel-fire and sword, under the sharp and harsh discipline of the Cross. Thus appeared *Paul* to the *rich, full, wise, strong and honourable, first-covenant Corinthians*. The right or wrong choice, in this case (when two sorts of righteous lives, in first and second covenant, Law or Gospel, spirit of nature or grace, are set before them) does put the first and second covenant brethren, in Christ, into a direct contrariety to each other. The former sit and speak against their own mothers sons, in the latter; *Psal. 50. 20.* The *Cains, Ishmaels, and Esaus*, in the former, despise, mock, scorn, and have a murderous mind of enmity against the latter, from beginning of the world to the ending thereof. They reckon them fools and mad-men, and all their cross-doctrine upon nature, at best, in the highest righteousness and wisdom thereof, down-right folly and madness. On the other hand, the spiritual Saint and true *Secr of God*, does evidently see them to be the fools and mad-men, that by making their choice, in their own wisdom, strike up an everlasting covenant with the devil, in unchangable enmity to God, and his. These foolish, nor for lusts of theirs, after, and dorings upon the fading life, riches.

riches and glory of their own nature, sink them into everlasting destruction and perdition. The principal design and intendment of this Scripture, is to discover this evil concupiscence, and warn against it. This is the *inordinate affection*, that is the highest sort of *covetousness and idolatry*, in unchangeable enmity to that spirit, in which alone true life and durable riches are to be found. In all their fatness, riches and fullness, *leanness enters into their souls*; they are at the same time, *empty, naked, poor, blind and miserable*, as to any thing of true durable life, riches, food, or clothing; *Psal. 106. 15. Rev. 3. 17.* The thoughts and words of Gods wisdom, herein, are in a perfect contrariety to mans. They think, they *need nothing*, conducible to their true blessedness, God saies, they need every thing, have nothing towards it, as Christ told the young man, that hoped he should have heard from him, that he *lacked nothing for eternal life*. They fall into the same snare, the Devil fell into at first, by the same evil lust, springing up in him, after the first-covenant life and glory of his own nature, in preference and opposition to the second. He followed this lust, and with a full purpose of heart, resolved to fulfill it; so did finish and compleat that unpardonable sin, against the new-creature, Gospel spirit of Christ, which became eternal death to him, with his followers. And, man, in bringing the like unchangeable misery and mischief upon his own head, is both principal and accessory, through his own willful choice, in the like known rebellion against God's spiritual Law, Neither man nor angel can ever say, *they were tempted by God*, to this; *Jam. 1. 13. 15.* Christ has, both by his example and command, directed both, to a clean contrary choice and course. God has back'd his prohibition of their evil choice, with the menaces of eternal death; encouraged the contrary choice, with the sure and firm promises of eternal life. This, to the utmost, clears God, from the least of tempting influence upon them, to such evil. Nor can Man or Angel, pretend any cause or necessity, in their first-created natural beings, or changable life thereof, for the making such an evil and rebellious choice, or conducting towards any inclination that way.

So must they both sit down for ever, and own their destruction, to be singly and merely of themselves. For, in the day they were created, no such iniquity was found in them; *Ezek. 28. 15.* They came pure and clean, out of Gods creating hand. They were both fitted to answer his mind, as created in the perfect purity and righteousness of their own changable life and nature, and in a changable subjection and obedience to his new-creature-spirit and everlasting life thereof. But they both seek out and follow their own Inventions, to their own eternal ruine. For, by this means, a spirit of unchangeable enmity to God, becomes the root and spring of all zheir life, desire, thought, and action. When the same evil lust springs up in men, as, at first, in evil angels, after the same fading first-creation-glory and riches, Satan is ready for them, there, to gratify them, beyond all that their hearts can wish. So does he nourish them up in those foolish and hurtful lusts, that will render them hurtfull to others round about them, friends and foes; by enticing the former, into the same snare and perdition with themselves, and most injuriously persecuting the latter, the true spiritual saint, for his contrary mind, doctrine, and way. A

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Bare natural inclination to self preserving, is not sin. The natural will in Christ himself, cast out such a word ; *If it be possible, let this Cup pass.* But he presently drew it back, with a *not my will, but thine.* But, devil and man, follow the enticement of this desire, so that their lust conceives and brings forth sin ; that sin, which, when finished, is unchangable enmity to God, which brings forth eternal death to them, as the just wages and recompence thereof. Such mens god is their belly, or natural desire, and they glory in their shame. They go upon their belly with the Serpent, feeding on the dust, or perishing vanities of the first-creation world, visible or invisible glories and excellencies of natural man or angel. And they glory in that fading life, food, and treasure, as that, and they therein, are turned into unchangable enmity to God, which renders them and all they have, the most shameful and abominable things, in Gods sight, imaginable. For, they mind only those earthly first-creation things of man, with Satan ; are enemies to the Cross of Christ, whose end therefore must needs be the same destruction, with him ; Phil. 3. 18, 19. These glories in their own shame, with all their long prayers, preachings, good words, and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of such as are simple (or undiscerning in the spiritual Gospel-truths of Christ) not serving the Lord Jesus Christ, in the spirit of the Gospel, but their own belly, or desire, in the Life and spirit of the Law, in flat contradiction to Christ ; Rom. 16. 18. *Dust they are,* and all they are possessed of, or glory in ; life, wisdom, righteousness, works, fruits, duties, and all their performances ; and when Christ appears, with his spiritual saints, in his new-creation-life and glory, to dust shall they return. With Esau, they have preferred the morsel, or whole lump of first-creation-vanities, visible or invisible, to the new-creation-life and birth-right of Christ, and all his spiritual Children, which God has given him.

• **Verf. 10.** *For the love of many (Gr. silver) is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred (or, been seduced) from the faith, and pierced themselves thorow with many sorrows.*

The love of their first-creation reprobate silver and dross (a first covenant life, and riches, in their own nature) seduces them from looking after Christs new-creation gold, in the second. And because they reject him and all his treasures, in the latter, he rejects them and all their false confidences in the former. Jer. 6. 30. *And, 2. 37.* This excludes not, but takes in the folly and madness of men, in doting on, and coveting after that literal mony, or visible riches and perishing vanities of this world, which are but shadows of the fading riches and treasures of a first-covenant life ; and these, yet, but shadows of the second. *Man, as his best estate, and highest honour in the first, the image of the earthy, walks but in a vain shew, an image, a shadow of the heavenly ; has but imaginary life and happines. He disquiets himself in vain, to heap up riches, there. All will vanish and come to nothing ; the Gospel-cross or spirit of Christ, will, in wrath, blow all away as chaff, and cast them into unquenchable fire. The breath of the Lord, as a stream of brimstone,* shall

shall kindle upon them. All are but fuel, and tophet-materials for the wrath of God and the Lamb. With the breath of his lips, will he slay them, and by the brightness of his coming, stain the pride of all such fading Glory, and cast everlasting contempt on all the honourable of the earth, that have set up themselves in the image of the earthly, against his heavenly, *Es.* 23. 9. They despise, deny, blaspheme and detile his name, life, and heavenly image. He will be even with them, at last. The Lord alone, with his spirituall saints, shall be exalted in that day. These first-covenant merchants (that sell or part with Christ, and all his new-creation riches and glory, offered them in the second, for the fading glory and riches, offered by satan in the first) can never enter into the kingdom of God. Such first-covenant rich men, as trust in those riches, are gone, for ever. The Pharises, that were before-hand with the disciples, at gospel-light, wilfully turned from Christs durable life and riches, trusting in their own. Such willfull first-covenant rich men, Christ distinguishes from his disciples who (yet aware of no other riches, under Christ, as a fleshly bridegroom) thought it a hard saying, and were exceedingly amazed at it, yet were not concluded under the same impossibility of entering into the Kingdom of God, with the other, *Mar.* 19. 23, 26. *Mar.* 10. 24. The very disciples were astonished out of measure, saying, who then can be saved? *vers.* 26. If first-covenant-life and righteousness won't do it, what will? So thought the Lawyer, the young man, *Laodicean*, and so have, do, and will thousands think. Which while some covered after, they have erred from the faith, or that Gospel-light, by which Christ had showed and offered them his durable new-creation-life and riches. This, they have wilfully and knowingly turned and wandred from, after satans first-creation vanities and glittering nothings. And so have they pierced themselves thorow, with many sorrows, as thereby bringing upon their own heads, the final wrath of God. All Gods dealings towards them, thence-forward, will be in displeasure, and judgment: and he will, thereby, waken up a sense of their guilt, to imbitter all, to them. So, nothing but a universal disappointment and vexation of spirit, will remain to them, from the dayly more discernable perishableness of all, they have trusted in, for relief. Their sorrows proceed only from sense of guilt and pain; import not any dislike of the evil, done by them. For, under all their sore trouble, anxieties, and misgivings of heart, their rebellious mind is still the same. They have *Esaus* sorrows, without any kindly repentance or change of mind: only such, as pierce and wound their hearts and consciences, mortally, and incurably, to eternal death.

Verf. 11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things: and follow after righteousness, Godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

Paul advises Timothy and all true saints, as men of God, born of his spirit, to flee these things; all those unpardonable iniquities, which the love of money, the first-creation mammon, the fading glory, riches, wisdom and righteousness of their own nature, leads them into. The fixed lovers of, and delighters in these, are men of the devil, children of that father, fixed in unchangeable enmity, with him, to God.

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But while he is the permitted God of this world, he will have these passe for the only men of God, the only true ministers, heavers and owners of the Gospel. The time for these to receive their full character, is, at Christs appearing in that true Gospel-life and light, which will discover all. *Christ himself, and his followers, in satans and mans day, are reckoned as devils and mad-men, impostors, blasphemers, and what not? True saints have no other way, but in faith and patience to possess their souls, till Christ appear, discover, distinguish, and set all to rights. He will appear to their glory, and then all their enemies shall be ashamed, Esay. 66. 5. The visible, first-covenant saint, with his fair shewes in the flesh, carries all cleer before him, under satans reign. Spiritual saints, true sons of God, go for worse then nobody, till Christ appear. It does not yet appear what they shall then generally be seen to be; 1 Jo. 3. 1, 2. They are to purify themselves, as Christ is pure, vers. 3. They must not look back to, but flee from all those perishing vanities, the others are so hot in pursuit of. They must not regard or care for any of those things: But follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. They must follow after the everlasting righteousness of God, and power of Godliness, in Christs Gospel-spirit, which alone can render any truly blessed. This is the mark and prize, set before true saints, to presse after a happy growth, and Perfection, in. This are they to do, in the exercise of true spiritual faith, love, patience, and meekness. A true faith in, and love to Christ, in his spiritual life, will beget, and be accompanied with such patience and meekness, under the sorest death-blows of the Cross, on their natural man, as he requires, saying, *Learn of me to be lowly and meek, till Patience has had its perfect work, or all suffering work be finished upon you. They are not so seek their own, the righteousness, wisdom, riches, and glory of their own nature; but Gods, in his spirit of grace. And this, without any offence at, or thinking ill of those ways and means, by God appointed, for attaining the same; the losse of their own will and life, at best, with all the things thereof. They are not to rejoyce in iniquity, but in the truth; 1 Cor. 13. 6. The first-covenant-life, rested and rejoyced in, is the highest iniquity, the unpardonable sin against the holy Ghost, or Gospel-spirit and principle of the second, in Christ and spiritual saints. This spirit is the truth, they rejoyce in.**

Vers. 12. Fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession, before many witnesses.

Timothy and all true saints are here exhorted, *to fight the good fight of that faith; that layes hold on eternal life, to which life and fight they are called. And thereby are they rendred Christs listed souldiers, who must not entangle themselves with the affairs of this life, or love of any worldly things, visible or invisible, in satan's dominion. All, that satan can fetch back, from what they have seen and tasted, by Gospel-light, at Christs new-covenant-table (things of God) to his gilded first-creation vanities, the things of man, the glory and wisdom of their own nature, he will bewitch and deceive. They that resolvedly, after they have tasted and seen how*

*how good the Lord is, strike off from Christs heavenly table, to satans earthly de-
 fireables, for establishing them in the righteousness of their own nature, do become
 satans chief listed souldiers and captains, to fight his battels against the Lord and
 all his Gospel-saints and truths. The good souldiers of Christ, must have a special
 care of being caught in this net. Those that satan has got at this lock, he will so
 powerfully and charmingly delude, as to make them believe they are fighting
 Christs battels against him, and doing God service. Satan has a twofold army of
 men, against Christ and his Gospel; *heathens*, in the dark polluted nature, and a
 first-covenant people in the enlightened, righteous state of nature. These, can he
 cause to arise, and play before him, to make him sport, in each others destruction.
 But, when occasion requires, he will soder these too parties together again, to
 consult at one table, and fight in one intire body, against Christ and his Gospel-saints
 and truths, if they begin to get any hearing. For, that will endanger the peace and
 quiet of his universal worldly kingdom. Till something of Christs Gospel, in the
 last and worst of times, begin to appear above-board, and undertake mans and satans
 other first-covenant-Gospel, he sports himself, to set his own beloved subjects to-
 gether by the ears, as delighting in the ruine of them both. He loves to hasten
 them out of their bodies, while he has fast hold on their souls, because they, no
 hold on eternal life, in Christ. But, when Christs Gospel gave disturbance to his,
 in his inlightned party of righteous men, they called in any lewd fellows, in the
 corrupt, heathen spirit of nature, to their assistance, against Paul and Silas, at The-
 salonica; *Acts* 17. 5. And so, against Paul and Barnabas at Iconium;
Acts 14. 5. The heathen-party rage against they know not what. The
 first covenant party or People, imagine a vain thing, against they do know what,
 even that holy anointing, or Gospel-spirit, in Christ and his saints, which they
 know will be Victor, and run them all down, at last. The hot ringleaders against
 Gospel, are a first-covenant People. Pilate and his heathen Souldiers, were igno-
 rantly drawn in, to gratify them, in crucifying Christ himself, for his Gospel-doct-
 rine. Pilate would have freed him, as not guilty of any fault, at all. The reply to
 that, is only a brutish, irrational out-cry, crucify him, crucify him. There is no
 dealing, because no hearing with them, for Christ or his followers. They are
 wolves in sheeps clothing with all the good words and fair speeches of scripture it self,
 interpreted by them, in flat contradiction to the true meaning of Christ, in all.
 The true souldiers of Christ must be wise as serpents, to deal warily, with these stand-
 ard-bearers and ring-leaders in satans army, against Gospel; and take heed, they be
 not caught in the same snares of satan, they are in. The love of any of satans peri-
 shing, worldly vanities, from the lowest to the highest, is of very perillous conse-
 quence to spiritual saints. Christ made satan go behind him, with all his first-crea-
 tion glories, which are delightfull to the sons of men, at best. Christ crucited that
 life in himself, as son of man on earth, that afforded satan a kind of hopefullness of
 prevailing with him, to accept of the delights of the sons of men. And he translated
 our nature out of that death, into the life of the Son of Man in Heaven, which is the
 living Word and Son of God. The death of nature at best, in us, is our full security
 from*

from the most splendid, glittering nothings, in Satans whole worldly dominion. When all worldly desire is extinguished, in us, *The prince of this world will find no part in us*, as not in *Christ* himself. The full vigour and strength of worldly desire and thought in us, is our weakness, by which, we are easily and willingly caught in Satans snares. The weakness thereof, is part of our strength, against them: The full death thereof, our absolute and final deliverance from them all. And, by the second operation of the spirit of the cross, quickning us up into its own life, have we positive salvation, or actual possession of an everlasting righteous life. *The good souldier of Christ, must throw off the armour of man*, as fast as he can, quit all the very righteous life, wisdom, and strength of his own nature, with all expedition, lest engaged, unawares, therein, on the enemies side. And then is he, as fast, to put on the armour, and grow up in the strength, of his spiritual Lord, and in the power of his might, to fight his battels against all visible and invisible principalities and powers of this world. In the mysterious way of death, did *Christ* himself ascend his triumphal chariot over the heads of all enemies. All his true soldiers, must conquer, the same way. Their own life, must be fought against, and run down by them in the power of the spirit of *Christ*, as the most dangerous enemy. This done, all other enemies lie as dead, at their feet. *Paul*, when he had received the sentence of death from *Christ*, on his righteous first-covenant life, he sided with *Christ*, as his faithfull souldier, in a speedy carrying on the execution thereof, for the hastening his compleat conformity with *Christ*, in his death. The quitting our own fading life, at best with all the things or affaires thereof, is the only way to be disentangled from all affairs of it, and lay hold on eternal life, in which we are sure and certain conquerours. *Heb. 2. 14. Christ* spoiled and triumphed over the evil angelical principalities, by destroying that changable life of nature, in himself, their dominion consists in. The spiritual sword will beat down all enemies *Carnal weapons*, upon their own heads. Saints have encouragement enough, the all powerful weapon and strength of *Christs* Gospel-spirit, certainty of victory; yea, of being more then conquerours; and, for recompence, a *Crown of glory*, and eternall life. Their own flesh, or fleshly mind, in the highest light and righteousness thereof, is their most dangerous (though not most potent) enemy, because a traiterous conspiratour with world and devil. But, that new-creature spirit of *Christ*, that manages the battel in them, is backed with the allmighty and infinite divinity, in his person. If the everlasting armes of *Father* and *Son* can secure them, all is safe. All thats divine and heavenly is engaged in this war, against *flesh, world and devil*; *Jo. 10. 28, 29.* God has promised, by an oath, to settle them in the true land of promise and rest, a state of eternal life, and has sworn in his wrath, his, and their incorrigible enemies shall never enter into that rest, *Heb. 6. 13, 18. and, 3. 7, 11.* Hence will foes be filled with all imaginable evil, and saints with unspeakable good, and comfort, for ever. *Timothy*, and so, other Saints, being called up, into the awaken'd exercise of spiritual life, are therein, called to make their *Good confessions of Christ*, in his new creation name and life, and a profession of their resolved faithful obedience to him, therein, before many witnesses. Who are these? *God, Christ,*

elect angels, and Saints own hearts and consciences. All these, as they perform or fail, herein, will be their justifying or condemning witnesses. Saints then are highly concerned, to hold fast their Good profession, without wavering (*Heb. 10. 23.*) in a steady course of obedience, having all these eye-witnesses and observers of all their demeanour, and thoughts. If they walk suitably to their profession, they'll be justified by all these; *Luk. 12. 8, 9.* All that law-life and righteousness of man, that is justified in man's day, as a state of absolute salvation, will be condemned in Gods: and all the Gospel-life and truth that's condemned in mans, will be justified in Gods.

Verf. 13. I give thee charg, in the sight of God who quickeneth all things, and of Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession, or Profession.

To shew the great weight of this charg to Timothy, Paul declares he delivers it to him, in the light of God, who quickens all things, and that, as the very same thing, Christ himself witnessed before Pontius Pilate. This confession, witnessed by Christ, was the sum and substance of all truth. The account hereof, we find, *John 18. 33, 40.* He owns himself a King, to Pilate; but, that his kingdom is not of this world: For this cause, says he, came I into this world, that I should bear witness to the truth. What truth? That by the death of that worldly State of our nature, at best, in the pure and spotless righteousness of the law, he might advance it into that new-creation life of the world to come, wherein he was to become a king. He asserts, that his kingdom is not of this world, or to be managed in the worldly State of a changeable first-covenant-life. Those that will be reigning as kings there (as *1 Cor. 4. 8.*) are in a presumptuous contrariety to his kingdom, and the spirit, wherein he will reign: and, on the other hand, the disturbers of corrupt worldly *Cesars*. The true spiritual fifth-monarchy mans principles render him the quietest and best subject, any worldly *Cesar* can have in his dominions. Pilate perceiv'd, that though Christ asserted himself to have a kingdom, yet his kingdom was of such a nature, as gave no disturbance to his Master, *Cesar*. And therefore, after all, He told the Jews, that he found no fault in him, at all. The Jews, that charged him as an enemy to *Cesar*, were themselves the enemies both of Christ and *Cesar*. They would have made him such a temporal king, in that first-covenant-life and state of our nature, he had taken, as would have rendred both him and them, enemies to *Cesar*. But, he refused. When he perceived they would take him by force, to make him a king, he conveyed himself out of their hands, *Joh. 6. 15.* It was their madness against him, for not owning himself a king, but indeed crucifying their king, even himself, in that worldly state (wherein they could own him as a king) which would have clashed with *Cesar*: It was this, made them accuse him, as the enemy of *Cesar*, under the general notion of a king, in a tumultuous noise and outcry. Whosoever makes himself a king, speaks against *Cesar*, say they. On this, though Pilate, before, was convinced, that such a king as Christ own'd himself to be, was no offence

fence against *Cesar*, He delivered him to them, to be crucified. And he writ on his Cross, his Accusation by the Jews, as the only cause of his death, *Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews*. All this, we find, *John 19. 1, 19*. Their pretended imputation of blasphemy to him, as making himself the son of God, would not do their work. *Pilate sought to release him*, notwithstanding that. So their last and utmost shift, they had recourse to, was to charge him with treason against *Cesar*. And so, without any proff, but a meer tumultuous out-cry, they carry it. Thus do first-covenant professors make the heathen magistrate the executer of their enmity, against the second. The true cause, at bottom, of the Jews murdering mind of enmity against Christ, was his Gospel-doctrin of the new-covenant, that spake death to all they rested on, in the first, for salvation. The cause, above-board, was pretended treason against *Cesar*. So betwixt heathen and first-covenant-People, was he hurried out of the world, as one signal accomplishment of (*Psal. 2. 1, 2.*) quoted and interpreted, *Act. 4. 25, 28*. *Of a truth, against thy holy Child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the People of Israel were gathered together*. But, in the midst of all that confusion and tumult, Christ gave a short, but clear and full Gospel-testimony, before *Pilate*, which is also to be given and owned by all true saints, as containing the summe of all truth. It shews, wherein Christs kingdom does not consist, and wherein it does. So does it comprehend the negative and affirmative part of all Gospel-truth. The negative is, that Christs kingdom does not consist in any thing that is worldly, or of the first creation. When himself had taken our wordly nature, in the spotles purity and perfection of it, he refused, in that, to be a King, Judge, or Ruler, or so much as to be called good, because but changably, not absolutly so. To this end was I born, said he, and for this cause came I into the world (or took this changable fleshly life and nature of man) That I should bear witness unto the truth. What truth ? That he had a spiritual life and kingdom, belonging to him, and as a seal to this truth, was ready to give up the changable first-covenant life and state of our nature, which was but naturall and worldly. *My Kingdom is not of this world*, or, in this worldly life ; but, in a life, perfectly distinct from this, spiritual and heavenly, in a spirit that is everlasting righteousness and truth. What is truth ? said *Pilate*. This question was answered before-hand. The Gospel-spirit, in which Christ was a King. That is truth, infallible truth ; which no other creature-spirit or life is. This good profession of Christ, before *Pilate*, are all his true followers to make, as soon as the light of his kingdom-spirit, is, by him, set up in them, which discovers and reveales him, in his spiritual life, to them. Their owning his kingdom, and their share therein, to be only in that more excellent, new-covenant-life, and not at all, in that, wherein *Paul* found the first-covenant *Corinthians reigning as Kings, that he could not reign with* ; (*1 Cor. 4. 8.*) This testimony will be of the same provoking nature, to a first-covenant people, (in all Ages) in holy flesh, the restored life and righteousness of man, as Christs Gospel-testimony was to the professing Jews. And, in witnessing this truth, the servants, as well as the lord, if called to it, must be in a readines, to deliver up their bodily life. *Paul charges Timothy*, and in him,

all true saints, to give the same testimony, or make the same confession of their Gospel-faith, Christ himself made before *Pilate*, as to the spirit in which his kingdom does consist, or any can be saved, let *heathen rage* or a first-covenant People imagine, while, and what they will against them. The true saints fifth-monarchy principle, gives no disturbance to worldly Governors, it looks quite another way, towards a kingdom that is not of this world, or ever to be expected, till Christ himself appear in the Glory of his new-creation life, and all his saints with him. The spirit they are of, teaches such passive obedience and silent submission to what the Lord will suffer worldly *Cesars* to do with or to them, as renders them their most peaceable subjects, and that, in conscience towards God, and obedience to his will, taking all patiently, suffer they never so wrongfully; *Rom: 13. 5. 1 Pet. 2. 19, 23.* The first-covenant professor, that the only struggler with worldly *Cesars*, for sovereignty, betrays the true spiritual saint, under the black, but most false character of a traitor, into *Cesars* hand, to send him out of the world.

Verf. 14. That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul shows that the charge given by him, to *Timothy*, in the former words, is the Lord's own command in his spiritual law; the law of that spirit of life, in which the kingdom of Christ does consist, and is to be set up. And those that are born of that spirit, so as to partake of its life, must, in witnessing the same, suffer and die with him, as to that changeable worldly life, however righteous, in which his kingdom does not consist. This command and truth is to be kept by saints, without spot, and they thereby, blameless and unrebukeable, waiting, in their so doing and being, for Christ's second appearing in the life and Glory of his kingdom, to the unspeakable joy of all his true subjects and members, who then shall be manifested in the same, spiritual life and Glory, with him. The command here, is, that *Timothy* (and, so, other saints) make the same good confession, Christ himself made before *Pilate*, as the very end of his being born into the world, in the changeable righteous life of our nature, that, through the death and sacrifice thereof, he might undeniably evidence, that his kingdom does not consist therein. And then, by ascending with our nature out of the said death, did he open and reveal that more excellent creature-life he had with his divine father, before the world was, in which his kingdom does consist, and is so to be managed. All this was the charge and command of God himself, to Christ, as Christ himself declares, *Jo. 10. 17, 18.* He laid down our nature, in its earthly; and took it up again in his own heavenly life, according to the command of his father. This charge and command of his father, he kept without spot, unrebukeable. He rebuked the devil and *Peter*, together, for their self-pleasing rebuke upon him, by which they would have kept him from keeping this command of his father, without spot, or any the least wry step, that might have laid him under just rebuke, from his father, *Mat. 16. 21, 23.* Now, as Christ kept his father's command, unrebukeable, so ought saints to keep his, on the same account, and in the same point, by the death,

death, surrender and losse of that life, in which his kingdom does not consist, for that, in which it does. It consists not, in the most righteous first-covenant life of the law, in mans natural spirit and make, with all the meats, drinckes and contentments of that : But, in the everlasting, new-creature Gospel-life and righteousness of God, which gives everlasting peace with him, and joy in the holy Ghost, Rom. 14. 17. Saints must give like proof of their obedience and love to Christ, in keeping his charge and command, herein, as he, to his father, for their sakes. *If ye love me, keep my command and charge, as I have loved my father and you, in keeping his. So shall ye abide in my love, as I in my fathers. And ye shall be my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.* Jo. 15. 9, 10. 14. Christ gave up his changable righteous first-covenant life of the Law, in our nature, for the everlasting righteous new-covenant life of the Gospel, without the least blemish or failing, in the dark and dismal death-passe of our nature, therein. When saints do submit to the full work of his cross, on nature, at best, or, in whatever condition, in them, not defiling themselves by any unlawfull lust after, or love to any thing thats natural and worldly, in or round about them, then do they keep his charge, unrebukably, as he his father's. They must not love their own life, but indeed hate it, unto death (Rev. 12. 11.) or cannot be his disciples and followers into that everlasting righteous life, in which his kingdom does consist ; Luke. 14. 26, 27. Mans cost, relating to the building up the house of his nature into a newness of life, is quietly to bear the demolishing of the old. If he bid never so fair for eternal life, short of a roundly parting with all that he has, the new building will never be finished. So, after all pretensions towards it, and quitting this, and that, for it, he will be exposed to mockery, and the same everlasting contempt, with other incorrigible enemies thereof, that never pretended any thing towards it. Christ, by his ambassadours, propounds termes of peace with us, and we must return our answer, in submission to his offered conditions, for an everlasting peace with him, which is the forsaking all that we have, life and all. On these terms, he will give us his transcendently more excellent life, and the enjoyment of all that he has ; vers. 28. 33. Saints, in obedience to this command, are to wait for Christs appearing to them in his more excellent life. And, this does Christ, first in particular, to each saint, in this world, when he quickens up the said life, in them, which is an appearing to, or a revealing of himself, in them, Gal. 1. 15, 16. Under the progressive workings, and death-blows of the Gospel-spirit or cross, on their natural man, are they to wait for and pant after Christs appearing to them, in the life of that spirit, which puts theirs to death, and not turn back, in their desire and love, to that life he is running down in them, or any of the perishing meats, things, or concerns thereof. And, both before and after Christs thus particularly appearing to them, by the actual quickning and setting up his own life in them, are they earnestly to long after, and yet patiently wait for his second personal coming & general appearing to all, good and bad, in the full glory of his spiritual life, to the compleating their salvation or deliverance from all evils, dangers, enemies, bondages and deaths, litteral or mystical, and so, compleating, their joy, in eternal life, *Unto this salvation, to be revealed, at last, are saints kept by the* power

power of God, through faith; 1 Pet. 1. 4, 5. While Christ shuts up himself, in an invisibility to the world, in this spiritual life, saints must be content to have it hid with Christ, in God; and so, in their invisible, spiritual faintship, however glorious within, in Gods sight and their own, to lie cleer out of the reach and discerning of the natural man, however wise, strong, and honourable in Christ, as to visible faintship, in a first-covenant life. This right, chaste and faithful waiting for Christs appearing, particular and general, Paul prays for, on behalf of the Thessalonians, as the only way to be kept without spot, and blameless; 1 Thes. 5. 23. And he assures himself and them, as to the answer of this prayer for them. vers. 24. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it; that is, preserve your whole spirit, soul and body, blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Vers. 15. Which in his time he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

Paul here explaines what appearing of the Lord he chiefly means, even his second personal appearance in the unchangable righteous life of his infallible gospel-spirit, in distinction from his first coming, in flesh, or changable righteous life and fallible light of the first-covenant spirit of nature. This, he appeared to suffer, in. The other he will appear and reign in, with all his saints, at the set time, for their full deliverance, and their enemies ruine, Ps. 102. 13. 'Tis in the life, he has raised our nature into, all this will be done; as Paul interprets, Ps. 2. 7. Act. 13. 33. This second coming of Christ, was the principal intendment, in his former, and of all the dispensations of God, from the beginning of the world, to the ending thereof; Yea, of the very creation of Angels and men. Both his comings were appointed of God, and signified in his written oracles. As Christ then has manifested himself in our flesh, he will, with the same infallible certainty, shew himself in his spirit, at his appointed time. And therein, will he make himself known to all, friends and foes, to be the only Potentate, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. He will then deal as he please, with all. And, mean while, does he make all the revengful shafts, spears, and arrows, directed by devils or men, against that spirit, in himself and saints (in which he and they will reign) exactly serviceable to his designs, by his cross, for the destruction of their own party, in them, the heel, or natural man, which is indispensably necessary to the salvation of their whole man, in that spirit, he will appear, and judg the world, in. Does God deliver up Job or other saints, into the hands of devils or men? 'Tis but for the destruction of that flesh, themselves are bound to mortify and run down, by his spirit. But though this second coming of Christ, be a most certain truth, the Apostle, by saying, which in his time he shall shew, does shew, that this truth, till then, as certain as it is, will not only be doubted and disputed, but absolutely denied, all along this world, under Satans reign, and in mans day, or judgment; and never be so universally scoffed at, as when Christ is at the door, and ready to come forth. The appearance of this glorious potentate, will be unspeakable joy to friends, and unutterable consternation to enemies. Amid-

night darkness, and more general disregard, then ever, of any such thing, will immediately precede it. Many in this or former ages, that from the cogent letter of many scriptures, have asserted Christs thousand years reign on earth, and thence been called millenaries, have given little aim at the Gospel-spirit or principle, in which he and his saints will reign. So, the very truth, the very Christ, the very spirit, in which he will reign, have had very few assertors. And whoever assert it, in the last, most scoffing, deriding times (*2 Pet. 3. 3.*) Must expect a fiercer shock of opposition, and a more universal contradiction, then ever. Many, that can digest the asserting of his reign in general, will be as highly offended as any, when a right character is given of the Gospel-spirit, in which he will reign. To none will this doctrine be more disgustfull, then first-covenant-saints, that are only for a reign in holy flesh, righteousness of man (*1 Cor. 4. 8.*) that neither Christ, Paul or any spiritual saint can reign with; but, over. They that hate all the right words or doctrine of his Gospel-life, will be sorry to see him in it; and a King, too. This is the most important matter, insisted on, all a long the scriptures; the crown of all former dispensations, all a long this world, spoken by the mouth of all Gods holy Prophets, since the world began, (*Act. 3. 21.*) Yet, how many, that pretend highly to be expounders of the scripture, absolutely deny it? So, when Christ was come, had done and suffered all, the scriptures had foretold, in the flesh, and the Jews had done to him, all, the scriptures foretold they would do to him, so as to fulfill their own scriptures, in condemning him, they were yet ignorant, as to what they did; *Act. 13. 26, 28.* What work does the wisdom of man, in righteous first-covenant Jew or Christian, make of it, as to the spiritual sense, and mind of God, in all scripture? Is not this a marvellous thing, that so many wise, holy, learned undertakers at scripture, should misse the principal intendment of all scripture? The Jewish teachers owned Moses and rejected Christ. They took not the meaning of the Holy Ghost in one title of Moses, or the Prophets, they interpreted. Moses, rightly understood, accuses you, says Christ, and owns me; *Joh. 5. 45.* At this passe, are many interpreters at this day, as to the right understanding the design of Christs first coming, as they shew, by not rightly owning his second. So, the holy Ghost truly interprets these interpreters, to be deniers of his first, what ere they say, think as hardly as they will of the censure; *Joh. 4. 2, 3.* If all that acknowledge Christ come in the flesh (as a matter of fact, without a due considering and owning the design thereof) were of God, what a world of spiritual saints, should we have? If not, what a world of antichristians? The Prince of this world, in first-covenant righteousness, such as Paul found at Corinth (*1 Cor. 4. 8.*) crucified Christ, in enmity to his Gospel-spirit of true Kingship, that would have owned him for King, in that first-covenant spirit, they were of, which neither he, nor Paul, nor any true saint can own them in, so as to joyn, and reign with them. All wise first-covenant Kings, till they become fools there, with Paul, that they may be wise with him, in the Gospel-spirit of the second, do most prodigiously stumble at, and misse the true reach and principal intendment of all scripture, both as to Christs first and second coming; nor owning the true intent of his first, in reference to his second. His first,

first coming, in flesh, and his demeanour therein, was in order to give eternal salvation to men, in the spirit of his second. So, deny this, and deny all. Both the negative and affirmative part of Christs full Gospel-testimony before *Pilate*, and so his whole Gospel is denied, and rejected, by self-confident first-covenant Kings. They hold the reign of Christ to be in that worldly spirit, and so his kingdom to be of this world. And consequently, do they utterly deny that Gospel-spirit of everlasting righteousness, in which alone it does consist, the spirit of the world to come. Thus by the carnal, first-covenant-gospeller, every word of Christs Gospel is thrown out of their Church doors. The spirit of all, is exploded as an airy notion, and the letter only kept within doors, and made much on, as pleasing their own and satan's palate, with the things of man, only. Nothing of the things of God, will down with them. What sad work must Christs coming forth in the true fifth-monarchy-spirit, needs make with all this tribe of professors, that are found in direct enmity to him and all his words? And never will professors be found more generally doting, in this case, then when Christ is ready to break forth upon them, and spoil all their work.

There is already, considerable acknowledged experience of a blast, and that a false, short-sighted interpreting of scripture, however kept up, does not profit the people, at all. *Jer. 23. 32.* First-covenant life and doctrine, for salvation, is blasted and withered; ere long, it will be laid more open and naked yet, as an antiquated ceremony. The clearer and brighter, Gospel-testimony grows, against this overspreading heresy, the more will it torment all that dwell upon the earth, or in the image of the earthly. On this ground, will both they and the devil be highly offended at, and have great wrath against this harbinger, or preparatory messenger to the image of the heavenly. This report of Christs near approach therein, will sorely disturb the peace of Satans and mans worldly dominion. But Christs actual coming forth therein, as new-creation King, will spoil all. Such spiritual Saints, as in harmony with holy Angels, shall be engaged in giving this preparatory witness (by way of alarm to the sleepy world) to Christs second coming, shall, after their wonder-working power, accompanying their testimony, be slain. And joyful will the inhabitants of Earth and Sea, first-covenant Saints, and profane common sinners, be. But, after a short time, their dead bodies and dry bones get up again, and they stand upon their feet, with all their fellow witnesses, in all times and ages, an exceeding great and puissant Army. This will spoil all their enemies mirth. *Rev. 11. 11. Ezek. 37. 10.* But Christs own personal coming forth, on the seventh angels sounding (*Rev. 11.*) Will yet more confound all incorrigible enemies. But amongst these, the first-covenant professor, in the righteousness of man, and form of Godliness, but enmity to the power, will be hardest put to it. The corrupt, heathen party, oppressing them to that degree, as to bereave them of all hopes of visible relief, will force them to place their hopes of relief, in Christs coming. And that very coming of his, will be more dreadful to them, then common sinners, as the keenest enemies of the Gospel-spirit, in which he comes. To such is it said, *No unto you that desire the day of the Lord, it will be darkness and not light, to you:*

The

The most gloomy and sad day that ever befell you; *Amos 5. 18, 20.* When all professors, in first and second covenant, are so hard put to it, by Heathen powers, swaggering over both their heads, in worldly dominion, so that theres no visible relief left, for either, then must they turn all their hopes for deliverance, by Christs second coming, to redress all grievances, and set all to rights. The spiritual party of professors will have the full accomplishment of their hopes: the other, amazing disappointment, as to any good, thereby: and not only so, but seven times and seventy times seven fold more dreadfull to them will the effects of Christs so appearing be, then all brutish and unreasonable oppressions, they groaned under, from their heathen adversaries. So, they have no shift left, at all; no possible deliverance, on any account; but worse and worse, still, till they come to the utmost extremity of misery, and find themselves, therein, remediless, for ever. This, meanes the prophet, in saying to such misunderstanding *desirers of the day of the Lord; It is, as if a man did flee from a Lion, and a Bear met him. Amos 5.* To this desperate passe, will multitudes of professors be brought. When all warnings from God are neglected, by a fleshly, first-covenant *Israel*, what lesse can be expected, but that the wrath of God should arise against his people, till there be no remedy, or healing, left? *2 Chron: 36. 15, 16.* None but dwellers in Heaven (*Rev: 12. 12.*) such as have had their conversation in Heaven (*Phil. 3. 20.*) affections set on things above (*Col. 3. 2.*) will have a joyful time of it, at Christs second coming. As rightly looking then for the great and glorious things, that will be done, at that day, the melting down all earthly first-creation vanities, and setting up new Heavens and a new Earth (or double-portioned, Heavenly, and single-portioned Earthly new-creation saints, and in both, a dwelling or everlasting righteousness) let them be diligent in all holy conversation and Godliness, that they may be found of him, without spot and blameless; *2 Pet. 3. 11, 14.* They are to hasten to this day of the Lord, by circumspect walking and growing more and more up in that spiritual life, wherein he will come. Then will this blessed and only potentate, this King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, execute judgment and justice, in the earth, *Jer. 23. 5.* And his true saints shall reign with him, on the earth; not in an earthly, first-covenant life, but spiritual, resurrection state, in which the kingdom is given him by his father, and utmost parts of the earth put into his possession; *Psa. 2. 7, 8.* This King of Kings, or of those highest, priestly, spiritual and most heavenly saints, that shall reign with and under him, on the earth (*Rev. 5. 10.*) was, by way of vision, shewed *John*, as having on his Vesture and Thigh, a Name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; *Rev. 19. 16. and 17. 14.* In this state, will Christ execute the whole divine mind and will of God, in reference to friends and foes, as made the only Potentate and King of Kings; even the man Christ, as possessed, not only, of that everlasting righteous creature-life, in which his name also is, the word of God (*Rev: 19. 13.*) But, divine, also. His conjunctive divine and creature-name, does he bear upon his Thigh, that is. on our exalted nature in his person, which is possessed of divine and creature-life, all the fulness of God, and of all that is truly called God, in him, the living-creature-word; *Joh. 1. 1.*

man Christ, in this transcendent exaltation above every name of highest saint or Angel, is constituted Gods universal Vice-gerent, by whom, next and immediately under himself, all are to be ruled, and ordered, as the infallible knower and doer of the whole mind and will of the Father, towards and upon all Angels and men, good or bad. *This is the man, by whom God will judge the world in righteousness* (Act. 17. 31.) *having committed all judgment to him, because, or, as he is the Son of man; Jo. 5. 27.*

Verf. 16. *Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the Light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see: To whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.*

Here's the reason and account given, why the man Christ shall be seen and confessed to be the only Potentate, as having a name, above every name, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, in his spiritual and immortal creature-life, in which our nature in him, is exalted into personal union with the very divinity. Hence is it given to him, whose right it is, to rule over all things. All blessed Angels and Saints will have an immortal creature-life. But, the man Christ only will have this immortality of creature-life, in personal-conjunction with the divine. He is possessed of a life, and dwells in a light, no other man or Angel, can ever approach unto, so as to be possessed of it, or immediately see it. He has also a peculiar creature-immortality, that fountain new-creature life, that is above all change, decay or death. Immortality of creature-life, is in this sense, peculiar to the man Christ. All other men or Angels, have it but by way of participation, and derivation from him, the fountain of living waters. Christ was set up in this original immortality of creature life, from everlasting (Prov. 8. 22, 23.) above all change, decay or death, as the beginning and original of all other creature-beings, and life, by a first creation, and immediate fountain of spiritual everlasting life, to Angels and Men, by a new or second creation. This foundation of a spiritual everlasting life, communicable to both, was laid, before either of them were brought forth in their changable natural state, by the first-creation. This immortal creature-life in Christ, is the Jerusalem above, that is the Mother, or Parent, of all his spiritual Children. One and the same spirit of the Head, enlightens, fills and actuates all the Members. And this Life that hath immortality in it, is brought to light in them, or discovered to them, by the Gospel. By the powerful preaching thereof, accompanied with Christs powerful opening the hearts of the hearers, as Lydia's; the seed of this Life is quickened up in them, which is Christs actual giving eternal life to them; Joh. 17. 2. So are they born of God, his will, his spirit, or living word, that, being in personal union with God, is called God. And so, saints, by partaking of that, are said to be partakers of the divine nature, 2 Pet. 1. 4. But, this new-creature-nature, in them, is never called God, as in him it is, because not in personal union with the divine, as in him. They receive all their various measures and allotted portions of it, from him, whose fountain-fullness of it, is in immediate union with the infinite divi-

vine Ocean-fulness. This immortal Life, is derived and participated from Christ, to Angels and Men. So, tis his life only in them all. They had no such life of their own, or in their natural beings, by a first-creation: nothing, but a mortal, perishing first-covenant life. This, God gave to them all. But *his own*, new-creature-life, to whom he pleases, only, on their lawful use (which is the obedient surrender) of their mortal, first-covenant-life of the law, in sacrifice to him, by the mystical sword and fire of that spirit, that gives them its immortal life, in the room thereof. On no less or other terms, can it be received, or ever could, by any Angel or man. Who ever refuse these terms, stouting it out, with confidence in the fading glory of their mortal life, against Christ, in his life of immortality, will die the death; be dealt with, in final wrath. But secondly, the man Christ, in this transcendent accomplishment, above all Angels and men, is fitted to execute the whole will of God, as *son of man*, in this exalted state, towards and upon all Angels and men, good or bad; *Jo. 5. 27. Act. 17. 31.* And also, as possessed of that fountain creature-life of immortality, that was from everlasting in personal union with divine, is he fitted to dwell in the divine light, which no man or Angel can immediately see, as he does, to all eternity. Heres the distinguishing prerogative of creature-in mortality in Christ, from the same, as partaken of, from him, by blessed Angels and Saints. He dwells in the divine light, without any interposing medium; they, never. They see the divine Glory or light, only, as shining upon them, through Christs creature-immortality. this is clearly witnessed by himself; *Jo. 1. 18* *No man hath seen God, at any time: None but the only begotten son, which is in the bosom of the father, who by his own creature-medium, reveals or declares him, to his blessed creatures. No man knows the father, immediately, save the son, who reveals him to others, through his creature-vail, the suprem creature-light or bright cloud wherewith God has clothed himself as with a garment, upon his other-wise unseeable and unknowable infinite divinity; purposely, to let himself down to the understanding and enjoyment of his creatures; Psal. 104. 2.* By partaking of, and dwelling in Christs new-creature, Gospel-spirit, that in him, dwells in and with the infinite divinity, do saints see God through that spirit, in him; never, otherwise. *1 Jo. 4. 12, 13.* *No man can see God, in his immediate divine brightness, and live, as he told Moses. God, in this, is a consuming fire. (Heb. 12. 29.) Everlasting burnings (Esay. 33. 14.)* To any meer creature-beings. But his shining through a creature-medium, upon them, is everlasting blessedness to them. He tells *Moses, he had found a means, to make all his divine goodness passe before him, even that rocky place, or everlasting righteous creature-state, by him, in personal union with him, which he calls his back parts, but his divine face, can never be seen by him, without this Vail upon it. Through this, only, can men be seers of God, and he of them, with mutual delight, and satisfaction, for ever. First-covenant-Life, wisdom and understanding, is the vail on mans heart, the very partition wall, between him and God. This must be rent, taken down, and abolished, that we may, by partaking of that new-creature-spirit, that's the bright vail upon God, see and enjoy him, for ever. Man, in the highest wisdom and light of a first-covenant life,*

can never see the divine glory, nor the veil it felt, through which it shines forth. Man, in all the light and wisdom of his own nature at best, is in downright *Egyptian* darkness, under an absolute impossibility of ever seeing God, there, or his spiritual heavenly, eternal, Gospel-things and truths. He is stark blind, as to the mystical, spiritual sense, reach, and significance of all scripture. If he might live *Methusalems* years, in the continual exercise of that understanding, he would still be at the same passe. He would as universally misse the spiritual sense of all scripture, as if he had never read them. Eyes, or an understanding he has, such as it is, but sees nothing that of a spiritual nature. Wise or fool, as to first-covenant light and wisdom; learned or unlearned, both are alike, at all spiritual things, or truths; *Ef. 29. 11, 12. The mysteries of the kingdom of God, the unsearchable riches of Christ person, the sum of Pauls Gospel-ministry (Eph. 3. 8, 9.) are wholly shut up, from both.* And thus have we seen, that Christ alone has that fountain creature-immortality, in personal union with the infinite divinity, and so, *dwelleth in that light, no other can approach unto, so near as he, by immediate union with it, nor ever see it, as he does.* These things are all peculiar to the man Christ, *to whom be honour and power everlasting.* Here is the doxology to this blessed and only Potentate, *the man Christ Jesus*, as possessed of original creature-immortality or everlasting righteous creature-life, and the infinite divine life. *To him belongs honour and power everlasting, as dwelling in the divine light, which no other can; and unavailing or revealing the same, to his creatures, through his immortal creature-spirit, which no other can do.* Unspeakable praise and thanksgiving then is due to the man Christ, from all blessed Angels and saints, as giving the vision of the divine glory, tempered with his new-creature-glory, so as joyntly to be beheld and fed on by them, as the *best feast of fat things and best refined mystical wines*, for evermore. The immortal creature-spirit in Christ, gave them an immortality of being, by a first-creation, and an immortality of life, by a second; for which, their very vessels, or natural spirits, must be altered, and made *new Bottles*, fitted to hold his new Wine, by a new-creating workmanship of Christ, upon them. To Christ, the fountain of all this, is to be ascribed, by all the happy partakers of his creature-immortality, *honour and power everlasting. Amen.* See Chap. 1. 17.

Verf. 17. Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.

Not denying the littler meaning, in reference to such as are drowned in the outward riches of this world, so as to throw off all care about the next, which is a fore evil, and forbidden them; it may be denied, that this is the chief intent of this scripture. The mystical riches, treasured up in the fruitful exercise of a first-covenant life, are as perishable as those outward; And so is the root or principle, on which they grow, and, in which, brought forth and heaped up. Nothing of everlasting advantage to us, in Tree or Fruit, Root or Branch. All prayers, preachings, works

works of righteousness, performances, the end, towards God or man, will be found nothing, at last, as to the main point, salvation. This life, and all the riches, in it, will leave the deceived professors thereof, nothing but disappointment, and everlasting vexation of spirit, because all is vanity. Those then that have never such a plenty of but this sort of worldly, perishing riches, are charged here, not to be puffed-up thereby, nor at all, to trust in them. So have we the full meaning of the Apostle, as to the negative part of his charge, in the former part of this verse, relating to two sorts of riches and rich ones, in this world, that whatever store of either, any have heaped up for themselves, they value not such riches, or themselves for having them, so as to swell, look big, and pride themselves therein, or place the least confidence in them, for true happiness. If they do, they are sure to meet with a total disappointment of their expectation. The folly of men's priding themselves and trusting in the outward riches of this world, the common light of mankind, can discover and reprove. Let us then chiefly consider such mystical riches, and rich ones, as Gospel-light only can fully discover the vanity of, and ruining error of a false confidence, in. Those that, at bottom, are spiritual saints, are apt to be high-minded and confident, in the perishing riches, life, glory, wisdom, righteousness and ornament of their own nature. In this posture of spirit, did Paul find many of his Corinthian, Galatian, and Philippian converts, with others; rich, full, and confident in holy flesh, which rendered them enemies to Christ's holy Gospel-spirit and cross. The Corinthians, in this folly, he could not write to, as spiritual, but carnal. The Galatians had so turn'd their backs from Gospel-light, to the life of the law, the glory and riches of their own nature, in holy flesh (which they knew, were to be destroyed) that he says, they were bewitch'd. The Philippians were so hot and confident, at this work, that he could not write to them, without weeping, as enemies to the cross of Christ, by gratifying their own belly, or natural desire, in this fading Glory and riches of their own nature, that he has so oft warned them against. The Scribes, Pharisees, and professing Jews, were so high-minded and confident in these uncertain riches, that they crucified Christ for preaching death on all they trusted on, for eternal life. Is not here evidence enough, as to the great need, Professors stand in, of this Gospel-caution, against high-mindedness and trusting in the fading riches and righteousness of a first-covenant life, when the delusion has bin so strong and prevalent in multitudes that have thought themselves so well to pass, for salvation, that they have withstood, blasphemed and opposed the very personal Gospel preachings of Christ and his apostles? Even Job and Paul trusted in this uncertain riches, before their regeneration, or Gospel-conversion. They were both, eminently rich in first-covenant attainments. And, though the over-value of, and confidence in these riches, was found in both, to proceed from a total ignorance of better; yet, at a dear rate, did they both experience the sad-consequents of such a mistake. Job sin'd not with his lips, but took the loss of all his outward riches, quietly. But when he felt the blows of the Cross on his inward, mystical, first-covenant riches and life, he uttered some unadvised words, for which he was reproved by Eliphaz, then by the Lord himself, and, at last, by himself too, in another night. He acknowledges, he had uttered things he understood not, and darkened counsel, by words

words without knowledge. When the Lord is exercising a temporary wrath, by his Cross, on the natural man of the saint, as to all the fading life, glory and riches thereof, and does not yet appear with the *sure mercies of David*, to them, in a better life; they are, through mistake, at a sore loss, and in the greatest distress and trouble, imaginable. *Paul*, though his confidence and high-mindedness in this sort of fading riches, was merely from ignorance, as to better (inasmuch that he verily thought he did God service when he persecuted the Gospel) it ran him, through a blind zeal for what he had, into such a high strain of persecuting enmity, and injurious practices towards Gospel-saints, as rendered him the chief of sinners, that stood yet capable of the Gospel-mercy, he fought against. And, *David*, once thought his *Mountain so strong*, in first-covenant-life and riches, *as never to be moved*. The more towering imaginations men have thereof, the more proud and confident they grow therein, the more surprizing and amazing will their disappointment be; Saints themselves then, being liable to be caught in these snares of the devil, are to be solemnly charged and warned, not to grow *confident and high-minded* in this sort of *uncertain riches*. This fading life and wealth, are not the things God delights in, though man do. And he abundantly declares his mind, herein. Even Saints, a great while, are apt to think this life and riches, of an everlasting righteous nature, and so, such as entitle them to the Kingdom of God. This dangerous error is with all clearness and spiritual demonstration to be detected, and so detected, and warn'd against, by all Gospel-preachers. 'Tis an error, that finally peristed in, is certain damnation. So, of the negative: The affirmative part of the Apostolical advice, here, as to what, men should trust in, followeth.

Even in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.

Christ, in his Gospel-life, is *the living word of God, which is God*. This new creature-life, possessed by the man Christ Jesus, and partaken of, from him, with the never-perishing meats and riches thereof, will make a man *rich in God, strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*. This life brings with it, durable riches, food and clothing, *things eternal*, which Saints should wholly fix their eye and desire upon; *2 Cor. 4. 18*. Perishing life and meats can never answer the wants of mans immortal spirit, or render him acceptable to God. Christ himself dissuades from *labouring after that*, advising wholly to *look after the meat that endures to everlasting life*; *John 6. 27*. Christ, the wisdom, living word and son of God, cries, in the public place of concourse, gives publick and general warning to all men, to turn at his reproof, from their own limple, foolish wills, understandings, desires and thoughts, as to true, durable life and riches. And he engages on this obedient turn of theirs, and listening to him, to *pour out his spirit upon them, which will make known his words to them*. He will set up a new intellect in them, that shall reach the full intent of all his instructions and counsels, which, while confident in their own simple understanding and wisdom, they scorn, deride and scoffe at; *Prov. 1. 20, 23*. The wisdom of man sets up a lump of blasphemous lies, heresies and falsehoods, for Gospel, and then

then decries all the right-words and interpretations of Christs Gospel, for a heap of diabolical delusions, and blasphemies, mask'd Popery, or worse than *Mahumetanisin*. The publishers of Christs Gospel, will be reckoned by such carnal, first-covenant Gospelers, unpardonable sinners, the worst of all malefactors, *a way with them from the earth, it is not fit, they should live*; *Act. 22. 22.* First-covenant-life and righteousness, fowring, through mans willful folly, into an enmity to the Gospel-life and all right words of the second, is the very *leaven of the Pharisees*. The life of God, in his living word or Gospel-spirit of everlasting righteousness, with the durable riches thereof, these are the certain things, men ought to trust in, for true blessedness. These then are the things, men should seek after, labour for, be ready to part with any thing they find to stand in their way to them; all their fading life and riches, in holy flesh, for the everlasting, in his holy Spirit, which giveth *us richly, all things, to enjoy*; even the vision of the very divine and new-creature-glories, joyntly shining forth upon us; all things, spiritual, heavenly and divine, so far as participable to meer creatures, for their eternal blessedness. Partakers of Christs spiritual life, *have eternal life abiding in them, the kingdom of Heaven within them, while yet in this world.* A fixed trusting in first-covenant-life and riches, is the strongest bar, and most invincible obstruction to any mans *entering into the kingdom of God*, or being eternally saved. They that are possessed of Christs Gospel-life, *All things are theirs, as they are Christs, and Christ is God's*; *1 Cor. 3. 22, 23.* They have all eternal good things, above all death or change, *given them richly to enjoy.* So, *they no longer trust in themselves*, or the uncertain first-covenant-life and riches of their own nature, at best; *but in God that raised Christ out of the death of all that,* into the everlasting life and riches of his kingdom-spirit; *2 Cor. 1. 9.* On the same terms, the death of nature, at best, in Saints, shall they be raised by the self-same mighty power of God, into an everlasting righteous life. All obedient partakers of the sufferings of Christ, in the flesh, will, most certainly, *partake of the consolations of his spirit*; *vers. 7.*

Thus, only, come Saints, by quitting all confidence in, or love to the uncertain life and riches of man, *to trust wholly in the living God*, or everlasting righteous new-creation-life of Christ, the wisdom, glory and riches whereof, are certain and unchangable. So *have they all things, richly to enjoy*, and that, for evermore. But, the greatest abundances of first-covenant-riches, *will make themselves wings and flee away*, as well as litteral, outward riches, leaving man at a total loss, to all eternity.

Verf. 18. *That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.*

'All this, as a self-evidencing demonstration of the spirit of Christ in them, the principle of all Gospel good works, and *fruits unto God, in newness of life.* Such good works will *glorify God*, and his Gospel-spirit and doctrine, they profess, as the first-covenant saint, adorns his own nature, and win's a fading glory to himself, by

by the fruitful exercise of his principle, in the life and deeds of the law. Spiritual saints, by being rich in their new sort of good works, will evidence, that *the word or spirit of God, dwells in them, richly*. To this Gospel-sort of good works, of the same everlasting nature, with the Gospel-principle they proceed from, does Paul charge *Titus* to exhort believers. For, such good works only, are truly profitable to men, because well-pleasing to God; *Tit* : 3. 8. Without a Gospel-faith, or principle of spiritual life, and works thereof, tis impossible to please him, *Heb.* 11. 6. This sort of gospel-good works had a share in *Abrahams* justification before God; *Jam.* 2. 20, 24. The deeds of the law, in the renewed natural spirit and principle of first-covenant life, had not, *Rom* : 4. 1, 5. They that walk in Gods Gospel-spirit, do not gratify or follow the fleshly mind and desire of their own, in the corrupt or righteous life and motions thereof; but, crucify and destroy it, with all its lusts; *Gal.* 5. 24, 25. The more, mans natural, or law-spirit is crucified and disabled, the more clear, strong, and undisturbed will he run his race, in Christs Gospel-spirit; in which alone tis possible to please God, or be saved. By being dead with, and in the Lord, as to the former, will he perform such good works in the latter, as will stand him instead, at last day; *Rev.* 14. 13. Tis only the Gospel-spirit enables man to perform all that the law requires. The spiritual voice of the law requires obedience to the Gospel, directs to Christ, for the principle, wherein to do it. The very law it self requires the death of the law-principle, or spirit of nature, at best. For under the most righteous performances of that, in obedience to the letter of the Law, lurks a direct enmity to the Gospel, which the spiritual voice of the very Law directs to. He then that is dead to the law; as to any obedience to it, performable in the activity of his own spirit (that's a sinner against the Gospel, and also spiritual counsel of the law) is freed from sin; *Rom.* 6. 7. Paul was thus dead to the law, that he might live unto God, in his Gospel-spirit, which enables to obey and fulfill all law; All that's required in Law or Gospel; *Rom.* 3. 31. and 13. 8, 10. The Gospel-spirit is charactered by the name of Love; being that, which everlastingly loves and is beloved of God. Then will Gospel-saints, as the bounteous Princes Daughters (*Cant.* 7. 1.) having freely received Gospel-life and treasures from Christs bountifull hand, freely give and bountifully communicate his counsells, to others, to forward the interest of Christ in them, and theirs in him. This is required of them, because this they are fitted to do, by his bountiful distributing and willing communicating such things to them. And, the good works of this sort, done by them, do manifest their fruitfulness in his spirit, and encrease their store. The more they communicate to others, the more they have, themselves. The wider they open their hand, in a free distributing to others, the more abundantly still will Christ communicate to them, his holy anointing, that will teach them all things, and lead them into all truth,

Verf. 19. Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

True saints, are built, and *build on the rock*. They live and bring forth fruit, in the Gospel spirit of Christ. All done in that, amounts to a *laying up in store a good foundation for the time to come, and a more sure laying hold on eternal life*. What is this time to come? The time of Christs second coming, which will manifest all persons, principles, things, and works, of what kind and sort they are, natural or spiritual, earthly or heavenly. Those that have built on the sand, will then be at a losse. The spirit of man, in the first-covenant life of the law, is the sandy, feeble, fallible foundation, of all, done therein. The heavenly, Gospel-spirit of Christ, is the rocky foundation and root of all done in that. *The day of Christ, shall by the light of it, discover, and by the fire of it, try every mans work of which of these sorts, it is*. All, that's by the light of it, discovered to be earthly, will by the fire of it, be burnt up; *1 Cor. 3. 13, 15. The mystical earth of mans nature, with all the works thereof, will be burnt up; 2 Pet. 3. 10. The Gospel-principle and works thereof, will abide that fiery trial, and remain approved*. Then, those that with the young man and *Laodicean*, thought they lacked nothing, will come to the sad and too late experience, that they want every thing, as to eternal life. To this day of the Lord, *Paul refers himself*, as to his Gospel-life and ministry, as the infallible discoverer of all things; *1 Cor. 4. 3, 5. He that judges me, is the Lord*, in the all-searching light of his spirit. As for mans day, or judging him, in the fallible light and wisdom of his spirit, *he regards it not*. At Christs day, off flee all disguises; and then, from under all fair shews in holy flesh, righteousness of man, form of godliness, out comes the unchangeable enemy of God. And from under the *marred visage* or crucified natural man (as to visible saintship, in the form of godliness, wisdom and righteousness of man) out comes the true friend and lover of God, in the visibility of his, before *hidden life with Christ in God*. Then, he that in this world, was reckoned a meer no body, the off-scouring of all things, the worst of sinners, by flourishing visible saints, in holy flesh, will be found the truly righteous, and they the most wicked of all incorrigible sinners. Then, shall men return from their former mis-judging thoughts, and discern between the truly righteous and unchangeably wicked; *Mal. 3. 18. Is there not a cause, true spiritual Saints should refer themselves, for trial, to that day? They are clear gone, in mans day; will never have his commendation*. But, being sure to have the best on't, at last, they patiently bear mans mis-judgings, and wait for Gods righteous judgment. Then will the mis-judging first-covenant-self-contented, be found the fool, blasphemous and mad-man; and all the shame and reproach, most unjustly, by him, laid on the spiritual saint, most justly cast upon himself. Then will it be found, that such good works only as are brought forth in Christs Gospel-spirit of everlasting righteousness, are truly pleasing to God, and everlastingly profitable to men. And by communicating to others, do saints encrease their own store. For, Christ will abundantly recompence all such

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high service to him and his Saints, by these Gospel-good-works. These works are of grace, belong not at all to the Covenant of works. They are such works, as *God works in man; and man, in God.* Men must, with Christ, be, in some degree, at least, dead in their very spirit and principle of Law-works, before they can live unto God, and perform right-works, in his sight, in the spirit of the Gospel. *Tis a fruitfulness only in this spirit and life, that *lays up in store, a good foundation for the time to come,* which will be a day of unutterable distress and need, to all others, that have nothing but perishing shadows, to shew for themselves. Nothing they can have been or done, within the compass of their own nature, will signify any thing, at that day.

Verf. 20. *O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science, falsely so called.*

What thing is that, committed to *Timothy's* trust, which *Paul* charges him to keep? Christ's Gospel-light and life, in him, and the ministry of his Gospel-truths, to others. This charge is obeyed, by a fruitful walking in Christ's Gospel-spirit, so as by a happy growth and proficiency therein, to wax stronger and stronger, as tis said of *John Baptist*, and of Christ himself; *Luk. 1. 80. and 2. 40.* That *Timothy* may, under the utmost triall of his obedience, be found faithful, on all accounts, to his Gospel-trust, *Paul* gives him this rule; that he *avoid profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science, falsely so called.* All the oppositions made by man, in the wisdom and life of the law, against the Gospel, are character'd here by profane and vain babblings, a confused insignificant babel-noise of tinkling cymbals, a heap of empty words, that have nothing, at all, in them, of what is pretended; but, are perfect opposition thereunto. Hereupon, all the words of Christ's Gospel-spirit and wisdom, in spiritual saints (that *give a certain sound*, in the new-creation trumpets or spirit, by which men are fairly warned, what armour and weapons they must be furnished with, to fight the battels of the Lord, against the mighty evil Angelical principalities and powers) are called vain babblings, as the *Athenians* falsely said of *Paul*; a meer heap of insignificant words. Thus do the tinkling babblers in their own wisdom, call the Gospel-trumpeters of Gods, by the very name, that belongs to themselves, babblers. This do they, to the utter exclusion of Christ's Gospel-life, and all the words thereof. Their vast over-voting number, against a single *Paul*, *Jeremy*, or *Elias*, that carries it, here, will signify nothing, in Christ's day, when *God is judg himself.* All their mouths will be stopped, then, and their votes be found in harmony with the devil. A great deal of pains do they take, to dispute and vote themselves, out of heaven, and keep the door thereof fast shut against all others. The absolute vanity of their evil and destructive labour, is character'd here by oppositions of science, falsely so called. These are Gods thoughts of all their knowledge and reasonings, as trusting to their own wisdom, for umpirage, in all the spiritual concerns and Gospel-truths of Christ. Their wisdom will be judg, what shall passe for Gospel, and what not. *This science or knowledge*
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of theirs, is falsely called Gospel-knowledge, utterly excluding what indeed is so. At this rate, they carry all before them, as the only expounders of scripture, reckoning the true Gospel-teacher, a spiritual wanderer and apostate, that understands nothing of it. Paul would not have Timothy meddle with such vain, empty janglers, nor make the like evil use of his own understanding, that's a tinkling cymbal, that so he may not partake of their sins, and plagues. Some, after that by clear Gospel-light, they have seen and professed love to Christ in his Gospel-life, have been bewitched back, with the Galatians, from his Gospel-trumpet, to mans tinkling cymbal.

Verf. 21. Which some, professing, have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.

They that thus do, erre, become reprobate, or undiscerning in matters of faith. They are justly deprived by God, of the Gospel-light, and judgment they once had, as to such things. This, get men, by erring or wandering from that Gospel-light, committed to their trust, and facing about, in direct opposition thereunto. If they proceed to an absolute wilfull resolution, in this folly, they are left, without all excuse, shelter, or help, in the unpardonable, presumptuous Sin against the Holy Ghost, or Gospel-spirit. Paul would have Timothy so faithful to his Gospel-trust, as to do nothing of the least tendency this way. So, he concludes, Grace be with thee. Amen. Amen, signifies his most earnest desire, it may, and strong perswasion it will so be. And this Grace is the very spiritual life and Gospel-blessing, committed to his trust, which if faithful to, will secure him from all evil.

Prov. 1. 33.

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EPISTLE II.

CHAP. I.

Verf. 1. 2. See Verse 1. 2. of the first Epistle, Chap. 1.

Verf. 3. *I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with a pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers, night and day.*

Paul had lived in all sorts of good conscience, moral, legal, or evangelical, according to his light, natural, legal, or evangelical, from his youth up; *Act. 23. 1.* When in the height of legal or first-covenant light and attainments, he persecuted the Gospel, he did what he verily thought he ought to do; *Act. 26. 9.* But, his pure conscience, here meant, is that spiritual good conscience he had, by faithfull walking in Christ's Gospel-spirit of everlasting righteousness, in union with his beleiving fore-fathers, all former spiritual saints, since the world began. For serving God, day and night, in the promised Gospel-spirit, that such our fathers placed all their hopes of salvation in, *am I accused of the Jews*, said he, to King *Agrippa*; *Act. 26. 6, 7.* Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, says he, that God should raise the dead? (vers. 8.) That is, that Christ and his followers, should be raised out of the death of their natural spirit, as to the changable first-covenant life of the law, into the everlasting righteous life of the new-creature spirit of the Gospel? This resurrection of *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, Christ silenced the *Sadduces*, with. This principal death and resurrection, excludes not that of the body; But saints in the unchanged mortal body, may be dead in their own, and risen into the life of Christ's Gospel-spirit; *Col. 3. 1, 4.* He also gave the hoped for, and promised enlargement to the spirits in prison (or saints departed, before his ascent in our nature) by the actual pourings forth of his Gospel-spirit upon them, in such sort as never given, till our nature, in him, was glorified, and opened the mystery of divine and creature fellowship from everlasting, which was hid from true saints in former ages; *Joh. 7. 39. 1Pet. 3. 18, 19. Rom. 16. 25, 26. Ephes. 3. 8, 9.* Under the Gospel-day, the spirits of Saints in the body, and of Saints that departed under the dispensation of the Law, joyntly receive the benefit of Christ's resurrection-life, and have a communion with Christ and one another, therein. *Paul*, as actually,

actually possessed of that life, under the Gospel (and speaking the words thereof) which was the hope of the fathers (all spiritual saints, under the Law) was accused of the Jews. He experimentally witnessed the performance of the promise to the fathers, that Christ came in our nature, died for our sins, and rose again, according to the scriptures, and so took possession of that everlasting life, which compleatly answers the faith of all saints, before his coming in flesh. In our glorified nature is he the object and author of faith, the finisher also of the life thereof, and so of the salvation of all spiritual saints. In this life, *Paul*, beholding *Timothy*, incessantly prays for the fuller blessings thereof upon him.

Verf. 4. *Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindfull of thy tears, that I may be filled with thy joy.*

Timothy's tears, signify his obedient submission to the cross, which will cause tears and sorrows to the natural spirit of the saint, as bringing it into a state of barrenness, house of mourning, and at length, downright death as to its own life, however righteous, which is better then the day of the birth of a renewed first-covenant life, and utmost flourish or feasting, therein. For, this death makes way for mans partaking of that holy anointing, or Gospel-spirit, which gives the new name that is better then all first-covenant ointment, or communications from Christ, however precious and excellent, in their kind; *Ec.* 7. 1, 2. These tears or sorrowful state of the natural man, make the sowing, quickning, growing season for the spiritual seed, which under the noise and activity of the natural spirit, in the fruitful exercise of a first-covenant life, lay hid, and as dead, and unobserved, by the saint in whom it is. They that thus sow in tears, shall reap in joy; *Psa.* 126. 5, 6. The precious spiritual seed will spring up into its own man-child-life, that will abundantly over-answer all the sorrows of the natural man, in its death-passe thereinto, and, at length, for ever, wipe all tears from its eyes. Christ's own soul or natural man was exceeding sorrowfull, even unto death; *Mar.* 26. 38. The living soul in the second *Adam*, of the same kind with that of the first, with its first-covenant life, under the law, did, in Christ, and must in saints, feel the pangs and sorrows of death. And all must be patiently endured, for the joy set before them, in a more excellent life; *Heb.* 12. 2. Christ's natural man had the joy of both a spiritual and divine life, set before it: Saints only, of a spiritual, which will capacitate them for the light and enjoyment of the divine, not actual possession of it, as an ingredient in to their personal constitution. The sufferings of the present time, to the natural, are not to be compared with the glory that follows, in the spiritual man; *Rom.* 8. 18. The fruits of the spiritual, as the true vine in *Jothams* parable (on the downfall of the natural man, the bramble) will be cheering or delightfull to God and man, to the man that brings forth such good grapes and wine, and other spiritual men; *Judg.* 9. 13. *Paul* is mindful of the tears of *Timothy's* natural man, under the Cross, as the only way to his being filled with the joy of his spiritual, as the abundant recompence of those tears. He was the happy means of leading *Timothy*,
in

in these suffering steps, under the cross, in order to partake with him, in the unspeakable joy of spiritual life, the Glory that followes, excels and remains for ever.

Verf. 5. When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded, that in thee also.

Paul strengthens his hopes of *Timothy*, as having seen the same precious spiritual faith, in his natural relations, inheritours of the same blessed Gospel-life of Christ. What *Paul* had observed in *Lois* and *Eunice*, was brought afresh to his remembrance, by seeing the same, in *Timothy*, on which he had a well-grounded expectation, to be filled with joy, at the sight of him.

Verf. 6. Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands.

Paul was the happy instrument of quickning up the seed of new-creature life, in *Timothy*, and he adv. ses him, as a spiritual father, therein, under Christ, to stir up and make the utmost advantage of that gift. So, the disciples at *Ephesus* (that knew only *Johns* Baptism of repentance from dead works, or chang from the dead state of nature, to the first-covenant life and righteousness of man) by *Pauls* ministry and imposition of his hands on them, were baptized into the new name of Christ, and his Gospel-spirit came upon them; *Act. 19. 1, 6.* This repentance or change of mind, from the changable righteous life of the law, to the eternal life of the Gospel, was granted to the *Gentiles* (*Act. 11. 18.*) which the self-confident, first-covenant righteous *Jew* reckoned he had no need of; *Luk. 15. 7.* One sinner, by this Gospel-repentance to eternal life, in the spirit of the Gospel, gives more joy in heaven, to the holy Angels, then ninety nine, just persons in the first-covenant, which think they need no other repentance, or change into the second. Whosoever's righteousness exceeds not that of the *Scribes and Pharisees*, in the first covenant life of restored nature, that is, whoever have not the righteousness of God, in the Gospel-spirit of the second, cannot enter into the kingdom of God. As *Paul*, so other Apostles, preached, and prayed, that their hearers might receive the holy Ghost, and then laid their hands on them, and they received it; *Act. 8. 15. 17.* They were impowred, actually to give the Gospel-spirit, or Holy Ghost, they preached in, to their hearers, by laying their hands on them; that is, they did, thereby, quicken up the seed thereof, in them. By this, were their hearers furnished with a new intellect and tongue, by which they spake and prophesied; *Act. 19. 6.* By faith in this spirit, *Joseph* and *Daniel* could tell and interpret Oraculous and significant dreams, about futurities; expound hard sentences, and dissolve doubts, that lie out of the reach of all natural or first-creation understanding; routed all literal or mystical Magicians, evil men or Angels; *Dan. 5. 12.* So the true Miracles

miracles *Moses* did, by faith in this spirit, non-plust the *Magicians* in their spirit, of nature, in combination with evil angelical nature. Nothing in the first-creation is able to cope or deal with any thing, in the second. *Timothies* stirring up this gift of spiritual life, the Gospel-principle of action, in him, imports a constant, faithful, fruitful obedience to the light and counsell thereof, by walking as well as living in the power thereof; *Gal. 5. 25.*

Verf. 7. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind.

Paul, here, takes occasion to give the distinct Characters of the first and second covenant spirits and lives; Of the first, by *fear*: Of the second, by *power, love* and *a sound mind*. The first from, its changableness, must needs be attended with fear, of losing it. So, it is a state and spirit of bondage, man has cause enough, to fear the death and loss of, all the days of his life, therein; *Heb. 2. 15.* In this life, that, at its best, is altogether vanity, a fading flower, a shadow, man has no security for blessedness. As many as are of the works of the Law, are under the curse. *For it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, written in the law, to do them; Gal. 3. 10.* The Law requires an everlasting continuance in well-doing. The Gospel-spirit declares this thing impossible to be found in the principles of the Law, that are changable in the life and righteousness thereof. They then, that rest therein, are under the just curse of God, when convincingly and undeniably shewed, the surrender and loss thereof by death, under the Cross, to be the undispendable condition, upon which they can receive his Gospel-spirit, in which only they may be enabled to do all things, written in the Law, and continue so doing, for ever. Where man, in the activity of his own renewed nature, is the undertaking do-all, nothing is done, to purpose. All our doings, or works of righteousness, there, will be undone, and we with them: All come to nothing, and we to worse then nothing, under that wrath, that will make us willing to seek death, or the annihilation of our beings, but such death will flee from us. The immortality of our beings will hold us to't, for ever, under Wrath. While then man labour's for happiness in his own spirit, he labours but for wind, or the breath of mans praise, and will reap unutterable confusion, from the just hand of God. Men seek for happiness, under an absolute impossibility of ever finding it. To their amazing surprise, will they find nothing certain to them, but the *fiery indignation of God*, for their wilful and presumptuous rebellion. They never obey the spiritual and principal voice of the Law, which directs them to quit the principles of the Law, for the spirit of the Gospel, that can fulfil all. And from their obedience to the literal sense or voice of it, through the unsteadiness of their starting principles, are they liable to roll back, with the dog to the vomit, their old sins and lusts, in the corrupt spirit of degenerate nature. So tis next to nothing, they can do, at best, in their own spirit of the law; and that, in danger, every moment, of comming to quite nothing, yea, worse then nothing. They are liable to turn all their righteousness into

unchangable enmity to Gods, and so, to be involv'd in all mystical uncleanness, and spiritual abominations, filth of spirit; or to return to their old trade of filth, in the miry filth and uncleannesses, of flesh. In both these miscarriages, they turn from their righteousness, either by turning it into unchangable enmity to Gods, as keeping it up, in opposition to his; or by turning from it, to the unrighteousnes of man, in filth of flesh. One of these two wrong way's, will all take, in their law-spirit, and self-righteousnes, that take not the right, in exchange thereof, by death, for the Gospel-spirit, and righteousness of God. On the account of all these defects and shortnesses of the first covenant life, as to answering the whole will of God, or meaning of his law, at all, or continuing to do it, in the lowest part of its meaning, 'tis positively declared, that by the law no man is justified, in Gods sight. Spiritual Saints are redeemed from this curse, by Christs making that spotless righteous life that cannot justify any man, a sacrifice to God, for all. The same changable life of the law, in us, if not given up in sacrifice, for his unchangable Gospel-life; but established in us by Satan, in unchangable enmity thereto, is eternal death, with him. This did the devil with his angels; they did presumptuously set up, for themselves, in their own first-creation Angelical life of nature, in unchangable enmity to God and his own new-creation life, in the Gospel-spirit and principle of the second covenant. This was their unpardonable sin, against cleereft Gospel-light. And when they were fallen, and obstinately fixed in enmity, they had all their first-creation-furniture still about them, as turned into unchangable enmity to the second, by which, when fallen, too hard for, and over-reaching to man, before his fall. So did they carry on their work with him, and ever since, labour to fix men in that enmity they brought into their nature, at first, in which they have proved abundantly successful. Man revived by the second Adam into the life of the first, and fixing there, against the true life of the second, is in the same case with the evil Angels. Angels and mans first estate, consisted in two things, the perfection of first covenant life, in their differing natures; and, secondly, this had they both, in a changable obedience and subjection to the more excellent creature light and life of the second. Their falling from this obedience, into direct enmity to the second, was the quitting their first estate or habitation, in Christ. In this irrecoverable fall, do evil Angels retain all they had in the first, with a skill to transform themselves also into the likeness of the second, on purpose, to practice all manner of spiritual wickedness, in unchangable enmity to that, and God, so as to deceive, if possible, the very Elect. Angels first sin, being unpardonable, they were permitted the keeping what they had, in their first-creation, to practice against the second. Mans first sin, being pardonable, (as not against so cleer light as the Angels, and as seduced by a higher ranke of creatures, already fallen, and all men not extant in their own persons, at the first sin, as evil Angels were) Christ took not again, the changable state of Angelical nature, in which he had been, at first, a pattern to Angels (in becoming of the first-born of every changable creature being, and immediate parent, and root of all the rest, the first-begotten from the dead) but our nature only, to atone for us; Heb. 2. 16. and 9. 26. and Rev. 13. 8.

The spirit of nature then, in the life of the law, is a spirit of bondage and death, in which man has cause of continual feare, and can never please God in it; at best, Christ did put this spirit of death, to death, in himself, and so overcame him that has the power of death; or has set up his worldly dominion in this spirit. When the unclean spirit of nature is cast out, satan can re-enter into the cleansed, righteous state of it, and by establishing man there, fixes him in unchangable enmity to God; so, becoms a seven-fold worse spirit, in his effects, upon him and in him, then the changable enmity to God, in his corrupt nature, amounted to; *Mat. 12. 43, 45.* Christ, by bringing death on the first covenant life of our nature, at best, in himself, and his true saints, delivers them from that life, satan has power over; and brings them into that, he cannot touch. In the first, satan conquers men: in the second, true saints are more then conquerours of him. This second life, communicated, makes them free, for ever, from all bondage, fear, or danger; and everlastingly justifies them, before God. God has not given them the spirit of fear and bondage, in the life of the law; but, of power, love, and a sound mind, in his spirit of the Gospel. They see satans serpentine head, under all his deceitful palliations, disguises, and pretensions to Gospel-life, and new-creation-glories. Power, love, and a sound mind, do describe and character the super-excellent nature and fruits of the Gospel-life and spirit of Christ, thats of power to do all things; and; secondly, is a spirit of unchangable love to God; and, thirdly, is found and thorow-paced in his statutes, fixed to do all he requires, and that, steddily, everlastingly; *Pf. 119. 80. 51. 10.*

Verf. 8. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel, according to the power of God.

The testimony of our Lord, is, that our nature in Christ, crucified, as to its life of the law, is raised out of that death, into an everlasting righteous creature life; and divine also, as the peculiar prerogative of our nature in his person. This testimony, *Timothy* being fited and called to give, *Paul* admonishes him, boldly to declare it, and not be ashamed of him, the Lords prisoner, for it; but be a partaker of the afflictions and sufferings, attending this Gospel-testimony, according to the power of God. The afflictions of the Gospel, that Christ himself passed through, and saints must, are the death-blows of the Gospel-sword and cross, on their nature, at best. In such sufferings for Christ and his Church, *Paul* rejoyced; *Col. 1. 24.* Thus are saints to do, in a like-mindednes with Christ; and secondly, as serviceable to the interest of Christ, in their fellow-saints, as encouraging examples, for such suffering, even to the death of the guilty sinner, or natural spirit, that in the highest restored life of the law, is still the enemy of God and his Gospel-spirit. Such afflictions are according to the power of God, who appointed them, to Christ himself, in our nature; and he, the like, to his followers. And hereby, will God manifest his mighty power upon and for them, by raising them, with Christ, out of the said

said mystical afflictions and death, into a life of everlasting righteousness, in which, at Christs second coming, he will render them visible, to all. That's the manifestation of the sons of God. The secret afflictions of the Gospel, run down the natural spirit into a total death and cessation from all the life, motion, desire and thought thereof, in a first-covenant state, to the utter marring the visage, glory, and image of the earthy; holy flesh; visible saint-ship. This renders the true, spiritual, invisible saint, with *Paul*, though all-glorious within, contemptible, without; to the flourishing visible saint, with his fair shews in holy flesh. And then, the laying their Gospel axe, to the root and principle of their fleshly, fruitful, flourishing tree, shewing, that nature at best, must be so served in them, this makes the blustering self-confident carnal Gospeller, contradict and blaspheme all their doctrine. And if this enmity be permitted to extend to the taking away the life of their body, that must go too, for their Gospel-testimony. These twofold outward and inward afflictions of and for the Gospel, must saints, with *Paul*, passe thorow, in conformity to Christs twofold death, in his natural spirit, and outward body, also, when called thereunto.

Verf. 9. Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose, and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began.

Here is a powerful motive to the above said sufferings, and owning each other in such sufferings, for the Gospel-testimony, as their Crown and Glory, in conformity to Christ, and the will of God. He has called them, through such suffering, to salvation. Men have a calling from God, and salvation too, in its kind, when effectually called out of the death of nature, into the righteous life of the law. This is the common, but ther's nothing of everlasting life or special salvation, in all this. His final saving any, is not according to the works of their own spirit, in the life of the law, but of his Gospel-spirit, in them. This holy calling here then, is a call out of that very life of the law, into that of the Gospel. A ceasing from all the works, performable in that life, and the very life it self, as an antiquated ceremony, to be abolished by the cross, is undispenably needful to everlasting salvation. The life of the law, rebelliously and wilfully stayed in, after Gods call out of it, on the convincing discovery of a more excellent life and way, is turned into mystical Sodom, reaking, before God, in all spiritual uncleannesses, whordomes, idolatries and murders, under all righteousness and fair shews in the flesh. Man, by thus doing, shuts up the kingdom of heaven against himself; and faran opens his bottomless pit of deceits and inares to him, by which he is certainly caught. Tis Gods purpose, treasuring up for us a portion of the grace of life, in Christs Gospel-spirit, before the world began, and Christs actual giving to us that eternal life, by his holy call of us into it, that saves us. No such salvation was ever promised man, in the changable law-life of his own nature, at best, for the best works of righteousness, performable therein. In pursuance of Gods decree of love, the supreme foundation

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on of saints happiness, was the distinct portion of Gospel-life, treasured up for
 them, in Christs fountain creature spirit. The seed of it, was cast into their spirits,
 while yet but radically existing in him, before personally subsisting in their natural
 beings. This seed, quickened up in them, is his actual giving eternal life to them.
 And then, daily nourishing and strengthening them, therein, to a perfection of spiri-
 tual man-hood, compleats the design, and crownes all. All is meerly of grace, from
 first to last. Tis not according to mans works, in his spirit of nature, at best, but
 according to Gods purpose in his spirit of grace, any can find eternal life, or scape
 eternal death. So, Tit. 3. 5. Not by works of righteousness which we have done,
 but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and re-
 newing of the holy ghost. That life, whereby man is made a worker of righteouf-
 ness, in his own nature, will and way, after his own heart, is not that, in or by
 which, any can be saved: but that mercy of God, that is evidenced by such rege-
 neration-washing, as gives a newnes of life, in the holy ghost, or Gospel-spirit.
 Mans first-covenant life and works are here clearly excluded any conducibleness to
 salvation. Tis utterly impossible ever to be saved, therein, or by. The unspeakable
 mercy of God, to salvation, is manifested to them, in quite another spirit and life,
 by true regeneration, which is a metamorphosis or change, from the fading life and
 glory of the law, in mans nature, to the everlasting life and glory of the Gospel, in
 the spirit of grace; 1 Cor. 3. 10, 11. 18. To all old things, in first-creation life,
 renewed, do inevitably belong mystical gray hairs, decay, old age, and death.
 They are still of the same perishing nature, as at first. Moreover, since the fall, in
 their highest renewal, are they sinctured with enmity to God and his Gospel-spirit,
 which amounts to those dead mens bones, full of rottenness and corruption, which
 lie hid in such painted sepulchers, as men in all fair shews of reall holy flesh, are.
 The devouring spirit of the cross, on nature, at best, is the true, practical expound-
 er of *Sampsons* typical riddle. For out of this strong, all-conquering spirit, comes
 sweetness, even an everlasting righteous life, and the never-perishing meats thereof.
 The Gospel-spirit of Christ, builds up the slain spirit of man, into its own life. Thus
 is the life and spirit of the law, lawfully used, when offered up in sacrifice, by the
 spirit of the Gospel. Law-washing reforms and cleanses nature from filth of flesh.
 Gospel-washing is a death-sanctification upon nature, that regenerates, and
 cleanses is from filth of spirit, too; and secures from ever returning to filth
 of flesh.

*Verf. 10. But is now made manifest by the appearing of our saviour Jesus Christ,
 who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light, through
 the Gospel.*

Christ, by appearing in our nature, has abolished death (or the changable life
 of the law) out of it, and brought an immortality of creature life, to light in it,
 and manifested it to and in others, by the actual gift of his Gospel-spirit from our
 exalted nature, in himself; *Joh. 7. 39.* Thus comes that life of grace, treasured up

In Christ, for saints, in the various measures and portions thereof, to be actually given to saints, whether departed, or in the body. By this means, come they clearly to see, that immortal creature-life, Christ had, in fellowship with his divine, from everlasting, in the heavenly places whereof were these spiritual blessings treasured up for them; *Eph. 1. 3. 4.* Now tis clearly seen, heard, understood, possessed, and declared by saints, even that eternal creature-life which was with the father, and gives fellowship to them with the father, as the only creature-life, he delights in. *1 John. 1. 1, 3.* John here joyns with Paul in the testimony to this twofold truth. First, That Christ had a spiritual and immortal creature-life, with the father, before the world began. Secondly, That this was not opened and rendred visible to Angels or men, till Christ ascended into it, and was possessed of it, in our nature. The appearing of our saviour Jesus Christ, in flesh (as design'd for these blessed ends, the abolishing death, and bringing that life that has immortality in it, to light, by the Gospel-dispensation and preaching) was rejoyced in by the holy Angels, and declared by them to men; *Luke 2. 9, 14.* By abolishing the life of the law, out of our nature (that, as subject to death, is called death, a body, a law of sin and death) he abolished death, and brought to light that creature-life of immortality, in it, thus above all death. So, put death it self, to death. Paul found himself in a state of enmity to God (which is a state of death) in the restored righteous life of the law. Enmity to God is a root of all wickedness. This enmity is slain, by the death of nature, as to the life of the law, in which seated. Christ set up the mystical law-temple in our nature, on purpose to take it down again, by death, and build it up into his Gospel-temple, and yet open the doors thereof, in our glorified nature. In our nature, as thus translated out of the mortal life of the law, into an immortal Gospel-life, the man Christ does manifest himself to be our Lord and Saviour. He has, in our nature, unsealed the book, and unlocked the doors of this life, so as to render it visible to saints and Angels. And this sight of it, does transform them into it, and assimilate them to himself, in it.

Verf. 11. Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

Here is Pauls high dignity. He was a fully qualified declarer of Christs person, and everlasting salvation to men, in his Gospel-life, which is never to be found in the most righteous life of the law. By the revealing of the son of God in him, Paul was possess'd of this Gospel-life, in such sort, measure and degree, as rendred him an eminently qualified preacher of the right words thereof, to others; specially, to the gentiles. To them did he preach the unsearchable riches of Christs gospel-spirit and life; *Eph. 3. 8.* How he came to the knowledge of these mysteries, he shews, *verf. 1, 7.* When the man Christ had opened the glorious fellowship of divine and creature life, he poured forth from our exalted nature in him, that new-creature spirit or holy ghost, that was part of the, before, hidden mystery, by which he enables to see and enjoy the whole. The wonderfull effects hereof, we find

find; *Act. 2. 33.* A large measure of the same Spirit, was, afterwards, bestowed on *Paul*, which made him a more abundant labourer in the Gospel, then all the other Apostles, in Christ, before him; *1 Cor. 15. 10.* The gift of this Spirit was the promise of the father (*Act. 1.*) performed by the son; *Act. 2.* In this Gospel-spirit, he became a better husband and comforter, then in flesh, or first-covenant life of the law; *Joh. 14. 16, 17.* and vers. 25, 26. This Spirit brought to their remembrance, or gave them the full understanding of all he said to them, while a fleshly bridegroom, with them. This Spirit was not so given, in the law-day, but it was revealed to spiritual saints then, that it would be so given, in the Gospel-day; *1 Pet. 1. 10, 12.* Blessed Angels, and saints departed, waited in a sort of confinement, for this opening of the whole mystery of God the father and of Christ, by the man Christ, in the beginning of his Gospel-dispensation. These are things the Angels also desire to look into. The Gospel-dispensation, by the new ministry of the Apostles, properly began, on the effusion of the Gospel-spirit upon them, from Christs ascended humanity; *Act. 2.* Christ, while in the flesh, laid his Gospel-axe to the root of mans fleshly tree, the very principle of all their fruits, brought forth in a first-covenant-life; he preached Gospel-fire and sword to their house on the sand, declaring no such thing as everlasting salvation, ever to be found therein. And for this, they crucified him. Those that take up in the form of Godliness, will make the same tumultuous insurrections against the power of it, in the Servants, as in the Lord and Master. Many high pretenders to Gospel, under the Gospel-day, will be found in perfect contradiction and enmity to the Gospel-faith of spiritual saints, under the dispensation of the law. The inward principle of life, and way of salvation was ever the same, under all dispensations. Never was eternal salvation to be had in the old covenant-life of the law, but new-covenant-life of the Gospel, by Angel or man. Not in the old or first-creation, natural state of either, at best; but, new, or second creation state of both, in the spirit of grace. The self-confident *Jews*, in the first, contradicted and blasphemed the Gospel-doctrin of the second; So *Paul* turned from them, to preach it to the *Gentiles*; *Act. 13. 45, 46.* And this, according to the Lords command, vers. 47. and *Act. 22. 21.* So was he properly a teacher of the *Gentiles*. The means of opening the whole mystery of God, was the slain *Lamb*, in our nature. He only was able to open the sealed Book, even his own new-creature spirit, the living word of God, which contains the distinct measures of Gods wrath, for incorrigible enemies, sealed up amongst his treasures of grace and love, for friends; *Rev. 5. 1, -9. Dent. 32. 34, 35.* As slain in the first-covenant life of our nature, he was qualified to open the second. No other, save this new name or life of Christ, can any be saved in; *Act. 4. 11, 12.* This life, set open by Christ, and communicated to *Paul*, in an extraordinary manner and measure, qualified him to see and declare the unsearchable riches of Christs glorious person, and so, to be signally instrumental, for the communicating of the same blessed life to others, which is absolute salvation to all the happy partakers thereof.

Verf. 12. For the which cause I also suffer these things; nevertheless, I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have beleaved, and I am perswaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day.

Paul suffered great persecution, singly on this account, his declaring the unsearchable riches of Christ, and whole counsell of God, about the salvation of men. He preached the cross, and death to nature, in the first-covenant life of the law, as undispensably requisite to their receiving that Gospel-life, that's absolute salvation. This doctrine is so highly offensive to man, that it brings all sorts of opposition and persecution on the heads of those that preach it. But no cause have preachers of Christ's Gospel to be ashamed of such their sufferings. For, sayes *Paul*, *I know whom I have trusted, &c.* He believed or trusted in that spiritual life of Christ, wherein he was enabled to do and bear all things. This all-powerful life he had in him; and therein, knew his spiritual union with Christ, the fountain thereof; So, could do all things, through his strengthening him. *Phil. 4. 13.* His Gospel-life, carried him through all variety of condition, his natural man, inward or outward, could be brought into. It instructed him to make a right use of all occurrents, according to the will of God. It enabled him, clearly to understand and obey the voice of God, in all; *vers. 11, 12.* In the utmost distress within, under the sharp discipline of the cross; or without, from a persecuting world, he was never at a losse. He knew whom he beleaved, and what he had to trust to, that would never fail him, even, Christ in his everlasting righteous Gospel-life, that can answer all his wants, turn a prison into a palace. This kept him from all fear or shame in his utmost sufferings. And he was perswaded also, Christ would keep that which he had committed to him, against that day. He delivered himself up to Christ, to preserve his own spiritual life, communicated to, and set up in him, by his mighty new-creation power. He commits himself wholly to Christ, to keep him steady, in a constant growth and dayly proficiency, under farther revelations and discoveries, therein, till his whole man were brought into a universal obedience to him, in all things. This work was too great for *Paul*, while any thing of the foe of his own house, his fleshly or natural mind, hung about him, uncrucified. For, that, being in union with world and devil, hindred the operation of his spiritual, and rebelled against Christ himself; *Rom. 7. 15.* Under his conduct, and protecting wings, his almighty divine and mighty creature power, he doubts not the being kept safe in his whole spirit, soul and body, to his second coming, as he prayed for the *Thessalonians*; *1 Thes. 5. 23.* Spiritual saints, from a sense of their own disability, give up themselves, into the hands of Christ, to run down all enemies to him and his life, in them, without or within, & strengthen their hand in God. Christ's new-creation name, is the strong tower, they run into; and are safe; *Prov. 18. 10.* So, *David*; *Psal. 4. 8.* and *119. 117.* That unspeakable gift of spiritual life, that Christ commits to, and trusts saints with, they find it their only way for a faithful discharging their trust, to commit that and their whole persons back again to him, to keep all safe.

Verf.

Verf. 13. Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

This form of sound words, is the sum of all Gospel-truth, as it is in Jesus. By his Gospel-spirit of truth, he crucified our nature, at best, in the changeable life of the law, and so shewed us the way, to that everlasting creature-life, he had with the father, before the world began; *Joh. 17. 5.* All that has been done and suffered by Christ, in that variety of creature-nature, wherein Priest and Sacrifice, is the substance of all sound Gospel-words or doctrine. All life, all wisdom and knowledge, divine and creaturely, are treasured up in him. The man Christ, setting open the mystery of his divine and everlasting creature-fellowship, makes up, declares and communicates the unsearchable riches of his person. This is the form of sound words, in which the true preaching of the Gospel does consist; a full witness to Christs person, and, therein, a clear declaration of Gods whole mind and counsel, for the salvation of men. All this, *Paul* having declared to *Timothy*, charges him to hold it fast, with that faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. *Paul* saw such a spiritual faith in *Timothy*, as in his mother *Eunice*, and grandmother *Lois*, amounting to the actual birth of spiritual life. By this, he knew *Timothy*, fitted to obey this fatherly counsell of his, in holding fast his Gospel-testimony, so as to admit nothing contrary thereunto. He was bound, with *Paul*, to commit himself wholly to Christs conduct, for the safe keeping his whole person, and that unchangeable good thing, his unspeakable gift of spiritual life, in him, and to cause his daily thriving and growth therein, by his more abundant revelation or discoveries of himself to him. This charge is *Timothy* to observe, answerable to his faith in, and love to Christ, begotten by *Pauls* Gospel-ministry. His holding all sound Gospel-words fast, imports a faithful obedience to them, as well as declaration of them, to others; least when he has preached them to others, he himself should be a cast-away, as *Paul* says of himself; *1 Cor. 9. 27.* A universal Gospel-obedience to the words of Christ, the wisdom of God, will prove eternal life to man; *Prov. 4. 13.*

Verf. 14. That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

Paul here continues his advice to *Timothy*, for keeping the good thing committed to him; shewing him the way and means of so doing, even by the holy Ghost which dwelleth in us. The good thing to be so warily kept, is the incorruptible seed of God, quickned up into its own spiritual life, peculiar activity and operation. This is committed to saints, and they know they have it by its own self-evidencing demonstration. Their conscience beares them witness in the holy Ghost they have it, and live in obedience to Christ, in it. His spirit undeniably witnesses to and with their spirit, that in this newness of life, they are the sons of God, and bring forth fruit unto God; *Rom. 8. 16. and 6. 4.* Spiritual life is the hi, he t
kind

kind of creature-life, and gives the most satisfying, undeniable demonstration of its self, by its own self-evidencing fruits and operations ; by the fruits of it in saints, love, joy, peace, &c. (*Gal. 5. 22, 23.*) and the fruits they, therein, bring forth to God. Bodily, the lowest sort of life, in man, gives undisputable demonstration of it self, by its proper operations and performances. Yet higher, first-covenant righteous life, in mans natural spirit, does by its righteous workings and fruits, carry its own self-evidencing demonstration. Yet these fruits are but such, by which, the tree that beares them, and root whence they grow, may be known to be but fleshly. But though spiritual life carry a stronger and cleerer demonstration of its self, then either of these, to the saint himself, and others, in the same awakened principle, yet it lies wholly hid from man, in the clearest and strongest exercise of the other two lives, bodily, or first-covenant righteous. All that, is downright darkness, as to the discerning of spiritual life, or any of the things, fruits, words, or concerns thereof. The spiritual life, knowledg, and discerning of the true saint, with all he sees, are utterly invisible to man, in the highest wisdom of his own nature ; *1 Cor. 2. 14, 15.* The spiritual man sees the natural, with all his things, and knows what all amount unto, but is not, at all, judged or discerned by the natural, in his spiritual life, light, or things thereof. The very Gospel-root and principle of his life, discerning and action, is utterly denied, as a meer fiction. The seed of this Gospel-life, being wakened up into life and motion, in *Timothy*, by *Pauls* ministry, he advises him, as a father, to stir up the said gift, and pay universal obedience to Christ, therein. And all this, *By the holy Ghost that dwelleth in us ;* that is in *Paul*, *Timothy* and other Gospel-saints. 'Tis the holy anointing, from the fountain-spirit of all Gospel-life in Christs person, quickens up the seed of it, in saints ; and it is the same holy Ghost, or Gospel-spirit in Christ, that by its continual hoverings over, droppings and influencings upon the saints, nourishes and strengthens the said life, handing the saint along, into a continual proficiency and growth, from spiritual infancy or babe-ship, to a strong young man, and, at length, to a spiritual Eldership and father-hood, in Christ, as *John* distinguishes ; *1 Jo. 2. 12, 14.* This progresse to a full stature of spiritual life, is figuratively signified by bodily, in the seed, embryo, quickning, and then actual birth of the literal Child, and then growth, step by step, to a perfect state of bodily life and strength. All along his spiritual growth, is the saint to keep close, under Christs protecting wings, and cherishing influence. For, his growth in spiritual life, as well as first quickning into it, is by the holy Ghost, or spirit of Christ, in himself. The same spirit, or hand that first cast in the royal seed of the kingdom-life into them, and then quickened it up in them, must flutter over them, as an Eagle over her young, to protect, cherish, preserve and carry them through all difficulties and dangers ; *Dent. 32. 11, 12.* The saints only way to keep this good thing committed unto him, is to commit himself and it, back again to Christ, and keep close and faithful, under the protecting shadow and nourishing influence of his divine and creature-wings.

Verf. 15. This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia are turned away from me, of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.

Paul strengthens his advice to *Timothy*, by shewing the sad consequents of others turning from those Gospel-truths, they were, once, by conviction, of the same perswasion with him, about; and that, through his Gospel-teaching. They were bewitch'd back, with the *Galatians*, to the fading life, Glory and riches of their own nature, in holy flesh, or a first-covenant state of righteousness. A fixed setting up in that life of the law (*Christ* sacrificed in himself, when convincingly shew'd that Gospel-life into which he translated our nature, out of that death) excludes all future benefit of his sacrifice, and leaves men nothing to expect but final wrath and fiery indignation. In love to their own spirit of nature, they do wilfully despite to his Gospel-spirit of grace. So are gone, for ever, without remedy; *Heb. 10. 26, 29.* After they have received the knowledg of his Gospel-life and truth, by its own light, they do thus wilfully and unpardonably sin against it, hate, and utterly reject it. They that take not *Paul's* advice, in a carefull keeping the unchangably good thing, committed to them, or shew'd and offer'd them, do apostatize from it, and forsake them that declar'd such Gospel-truth, to them. They berake them selves to the wisdom of man, set up by *Christ's* first-covenant communications, in them, as the teacher and judg of what they ought to do, for salvation. That wisdom of man, though received from *Christ* himself, in the first covenant, is meer, foolishnes to the wisdom of God, in the second. When men therefore resolve to follow that blind leader, they are wholly for man's other Gospel, in a spirit of lying divination, and so are led to the chambers of death. *Paul* instantly turned from that wisdom of flesh, in himself, when the wisdom of God was brought to light, in him; *Gal. 1. 16.* He lean'd not to his own understanding, any longer, but follow'd and trusted in the Lord's new-creature-wisdom and light, for directing his steps; *Prov. 3. 5, 6.* The following mans own wisdom, in this case, is the forsaking *Christ's*, and all his Gospel truths, or words thereof. Many followers of *Christ*, in a temporary Gospel-faith, or spiritual light (which for a season, they followed) apostatized from him, and walked no more with him; *Joh 6. 66.* They would not bear his hard sayings, his cross-doctrin. His fiery gospel-doctrine, on their holy flesh, they retreated from, into the cool shade of a worldly Church, under their old, Pharisaical teachers. If mans wisdom be admitted judg in the case, it will be for mans holding his own, against the cross of *Christ*, saying, 'tis good for him to be here. Will *Christ* destroy a righteous life of his own setting up, twice, in us, first by creation, and then by redemption? Beleeve it, that will. A world of consequential reasonings, a pompous flood of arguments, in this case, will not suffer mans understanding, backed with Satans serpentine subtleties, to look after *Christ's* Gospel-life, any more. As many, thus, forsook *Christ* himself; would walk no more with him, hear or regard him, so did many forsake *Paul*. True Gospel-preachers are not to confide in any, as steady followers of *Christ* and them, in first-covenant life;

Or second covenant light, short of the very Gospel-life thereof. Christ would not commit himself to such. He sufficiently knew, what a fickle, versatile thing man is, within the compass of his own nature, however adorned with Gospel-light, or spiritual gifts; *Jo. 2. 23, 24.* Rightly qualified Gospel-teachers, are, in some good measure, enabled to distinguish truly principled Gospel-friends, from bare conviction professors of the Gospel, who are yet liable to such apostasy, as admits no repentance; *Heb. 6. 4, 6.* If man, by following his own wisdom, in the first-covenant-life of the law, walk contrary to Gods, and all the Gospel-words thereof, God will walk contrary to him; *Levit. 26. 21, 23, 24.* And where is man then? Has he an arm like God? *All nations are lesse then nothing, before him.* Walking contrary to God, is called in the margin, a walking at all adventures, with him; *Lev. 26.* This is done, when they chuse to walk in the unsteddy principles of the first-covenant-life, in their own renewed nature, rather than in his constant, steddy, Gospel-spirit of everlasting righteousness. True saints must be content to have the spirit of Christ their guide and teacher, even the Holy Ghost, the determiner of all truth, and only safe director of their steps.

Verf. 16. The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus, for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain.

Verf. 17. But when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me.

Verf. 18. The Lord grant unto him, that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

Here's an honourable mention of *Onesiphorus*, with a prayer for the Lords everlasting mercy to him and his family; because his kindness was done to him, as to the Lord, or on the Lords account, as a preacher of his Gospel-life and truth. On this single ground, he oft refreshed him; and this, not only by a supply to his bodily wants, but by a communion with him, in Christs Gospel-spirit. He was not ashamed of *Pauls* chain, not only the literal chain on his body, but mystical, on his natural spirit, that is, the cross of Christ, manifested in its death-work thereupon, and bringing it into a state of mystical captivity and death, as to the life and free exercise of his own will. In all these outward and inward sufferings and chains, *Onesiphorus* owned and shewed all kindness to *Paul*, rejoicing with him, as thought worthy to suffer shame for Christ. All this evidenced his union of mind with *Paul*, in the Gospel-testimony, for which he suffered. This happy frame of *Pauls* crucified natural mind, as the Lords prisoner, within, made him regardless of, yea, to rejoyce in, any sufferings from man, without; *Act. 20. 22, 24.* When *Agabus* prophesied his sufferings at *Jerusalem*, on which his Gospel-friends besought him not to go thither, see his answer, *Act. 21. 13.* He gloried in his honourable captivity,

captivity to the spirit and will of Christ; and rejoiced to find *Onesiphorus* not ashamed of him; but, as in a like obedient captivity to Christ, with himself, ready to perform all offices of love, to him. He diligently sought him out, at *Rome*, where he was a prisoner, owning *Paul* in his literal chain, as the fruit and effect of Christ's mystical chain, upon him. For this, he desires *Onesiphorus* may find mercy of the Lord, in that day. What day? That, wherein Christ has declared, he will recompence the fruits of his own spirit, in saints, manifested in their kindness to his disciples, for his sake; *Mat. 25. 40.* and, *10. 42.* All kindness shewed to his spiritual saints and brethren, from a union with them in his Gospel-spirit, will he reward, as done to himself. And all unkindness or enmity to them, will he take as done to him. Eternal death is the meet recompence of the latter; and Eternal life, of the former. And this, *Paul* prays for, on the behalf of *Onesiphorus*.

C H A P. II.

Verf. 1. *Thou therefore my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.*

P*aul* owns *Timothy*, as in the grace of Christ, his son; so as a father, gives this faithful advice to him, by way of exhortation, to grow strong therein. This grace, was the everlasting righteous life of Christ's Gospel-spirit, communicated to, and set up in *Timothy*, in distinction from the life of the law, set up by the first-creation, in man, which, with all the glory and old fading things thereof, is to be done away. They that preach up this, for salvation, are ministers but of the old testament or first covenant, which, with all the things thereof, is but letter, type, or shadow of the second, and all its substantial things and truths. This new Testament or covenant, was *Paul* the minister of. The letter, or first, preached up, and rested in, for salvation, to the utter exclusion and rejection of the second, killeth; runs man, irrecoverably, into eternal death. But, the Gospel-spirit and principle of the second, gives, and is eternal life, to all obedient receivers and walkers therein; *2 Cor. 3. 6.* The spirit of the second, speaks death to the very principle of the first, as the indispensable means for receiving the life of the second. And, in this, when received, are true saints, by wary and constant walking, and waiting for Christ's farther communications, therein, to wax stronger and stronger, daily. They that preach up letter, or old testament-life, as everlasting salvation, kill and destroy their hearers, by their lies and falshoods, while they warrant and perswade them to hope, they will confirm or make good their word. All such preaching is a lying divination, a false prophecy; all they see and preach up for salvation, is but vanity. All first-covenant life, wisdom, glory, righteousness, are, but vanishing shadows of the second, the everlasting life, wisdom, glory, and righteousness of God. Man in honour, at
his

his best estate, in the former, is altogether vanity. That, in true saints, is in the wane, continually decreasing and going off, as they encrease and wax stronger in the latter. This, *John Baptist* testifies, as to the utmost product of his law-ministry in men, in order to their encrease in Christ's Gospel-life; *Jo. 3. 30. I must decrease, he must encrease.* They only that so preach, shew the way of salvation. *Timothies* waxing strong in the Gospel-spirit of grace, would be attended with the decrease and weakening of his spirit of nature, as to the life of law. To keep man strong, fixed and established in the righteous life of the law, is satans design and work upon him, in order to fix him with himself, in unchangable enmity to the Gospel. A growing strong in the grace of Christ, *Paul* knew to be the only way, for weakening and mortifying the fleshly or natural mind, in himself, and more carefully watching against all the anti-gospel doctrine or words thereof, in others. *Paul* knew, by experience, the dangerous counter-workings of the natural or fleshly mind, against the spiritual, *Rom. 7.* And he knew, the stronger the spiritual grows, the weaker the fleshly, and so, by degrees, this dangerous opposition of flesh against spirit, wears off, and, at length, quite ceases by the compleat death of the foe of our own house. All the most charming desireables to nature, with the utmost skill of satan, in managing them, signify nothing, when the worldly spirit in us, is dead, which alone can be taken with them, and we found in a spirit that sees the vanity of them, and is fixed on things eternal. When our own spirit or nature is fully crucified, in the will and desire thereof, all danger is over, and our deliverance from worldly snares and satanick delusions, compleated. *Paul* found such ease, and deliverance, by the Gospel-spirit of the cross, on his natural, that he says, *God forbid, I should Glory in any thing, save the cross of Christ, by which, the world is crucified to me, and I to the world; Gal. 6. 14.* The Gospel-spirit conquers all, within and without the saints, that is found in enmity thereto. It makes the saint, in conclusion, more then a conquerour; *Rom. 8. 37.* It begins its conquest, at home, within doors, on the very spirit of the saint, at best, in the most righteous life of the law. This, once finished, world and devil can make nothing of it, with them, for ever after. The grace of Christ in saints, is their spiritual, all powerfull weapon of war. The stronger they grow in it, the more able to fight down, what ever presumptuously exalts it self against it. Though saints walk in the flesh, they do not war after, but against the flesh, with all its carnal weapons, by spiritual; *2 Cor. 10. 3, 5.* *Paul* therefore exhorts *Timothy* to wax strong in that grace, which is his only security, against all enemies, dangers, and deaths.

Verf. 2. *And the thing which thou hast heard of me, among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*

Here is care taken for the propagation of the Gospel; that the truths thereof may run and be glorified, by being more plentifully received and owned, amongst men. *Paul* requires *Timothy* to declare and so commit the Gospel-truths, to others,

him:

himself had preached to him, among many witnesses. Who are these? Spiritual saints, that, in the Gospel-spirit, are, joynt witnesses with Christ, and God himself, and with all the holy Angels, who rejoyce at the sight of every true Gospel-covert; *Luke 15. 7.* In this high authority, before these high witnesses, had *Paul* preached Gospel-truths to *Timothy*, which he advises him to commit to faithful men, that may teach the same to others; and so, generation after generation, to the worlds end. What he here advises *Timothy* to, was his own practice. He communicated his great and high revelation or Gospel discoveries, from Christs own hand, privately, to such as were of reputation for an eminent knowledge of Christs spirituall truths, and obedience to the same, and so could receive the true advantages of what he declared, and declare the same to others, as they saw occasion, or met with the fitly capacitated receivers of such deep spiritual mysteries; *Gal. 2. 2.*

Verf. 3. Thou therefore indure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

A being strong in the grace of Christ, would fit to obey this further word of exhortation. *Paul* knew his Gospel-testimony, offensive to man. So, would prepare him to meet and deal with all sorts of hardship, without shrinking or starting back from any service to Christ, come what will or can, by the combined oppositions of devils and men. He must reckon upon the losse of that life, in the service of Christ, as the mysterious way, by which himself and all his stout souldiers, conquer and triumph over all enemies; *Heb. 2. 14. Col. 2. 15.* All life, that can be lost, must be lost by the saint, before his spiritual warfare be ended, and he fully at home with the Lord. The true saints Profession, is war. The enemies he is to encounter, is flesh and blood in himself, and other men; and, yet higher, evil Angelical principalities and powers. The carnal mind, or will, at best, is the saints most dangerous, though not most potent enemy. It is, in union with world and devil, continually warring against their spiritual mind; *Gal. 5. 17.* Flesh and blood also in other men, corrupt or righteous, in conjunction with Angelical powers of darkness, to carry on the mystery of iniquity against the mystery of Godliness, are to be dealt with, in this war. Great need have saints then, to fix their arms well, and stand upon their guard, against such a numerous army of crafty and potent enemies, visible and invisible, that as roaring Lions, seek continually to devour them. They must fight down nature, in themselves; put that to the utmost hardship, even unto death. And when this work is, in good measure, done, they must not spare their very bodily life, if their Gospel-testimony for the same thing, to be done upon others spirits, provokes them to kill their bodies. All these hardships to their whole natural man, must Gospel-preachers, be in a readines, to endure, as the proof of their being good souldiers of Jesus Christ.

Verf. 4. *No man that warreth, entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a souldier.*

In this spiritual war, Christ calls saints to, they must be disentangled from the affairs of this worldly, natural life, outward or inward. All entanglement with them, proceeds from the unlawfull love to them, and lust after them; either the visible concerns of bodily life, or invisible natural excellencies and glories of humane or Angelical nature, all which are but the higher sort of perishing vanities, the highest part of the dust of this world that satan and his serpentine seed, amongst men, feed upon. The true follower and good souldier of Christ, must endure such hardship to his natural man, as crucifies all desires to, or inclination after any such things. Satan could not entangle Christ, by the offer of all his first-creation vanities, at once, all the kingdomes of this world, and glory of them. This worlds vanities, to those that over-value and love them, become satans chains upon them; and snares, by which he entangles and detains them, in a posture of enmity to Christ, instead of being his souldiers. The spirit of man, corrupt or righteous, is, in its whole worldly life, desire and thought, the most dangerous enemy, he is to engage and fight against, in this war. World and devil, without, will be at a totall losse, as to the casting any chain or snare on the saints, when their friend, and his foe, within, is slain. And this is required by the spiritual law of the cross. Whoever therefore are for gratifying the natural belly and desire, in any kind, after, by Gospel light, shewed their true concern, are enemies to the cross, lovers of the world, and friends of the devil, who is wholly for gratifying and keeping up, what Christ is for pulling down and destroying, in men, as the indispensable means of their being saved. The true souldier of Christ, must eye the great Captain of salvation; set himself wholly to follow his example, and obey his command, in order to the victory, in his service. He must, by the death of all in him, that satan can gratify, overcome him. He must crucify that fleshly mind in him, that satan can please; and walk in that spirit of Christ, that can perfectly overcome flesh, world, and devil; *Gal. 5. 24. 25.* Christs souldiers must endure hardship, and contradiction of sinners, without weariness or fainting, as Christ did; *Heb. 12. 3.* Saints receive no hurtfull wounds from enemies, in this fight, by their persecuting enmity and wrathful blowes, given to their natural man, which is all they can hit; but, by gratifying the desires thereof, with their charming vanities. Their kisses and flatteries are the only dangerous wounds. All their angry blows at them, do but hasten the bruising that heel in them, that makes way for their final breaking all their enemies heads, and trampling them under their feet, in the Gospel power or spirit of their great Lord General.

Verf. 5. *And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, unless he strive lawfully.*

All that pretend any hope of salvation, strive and run. There is an unlawful striving. Many run in the race, yet not all, but one sort of these runners obtain the prize; 1 Cor. 9. 24. He advises therefore to be temperate in all things, that they may obtain; verf. 25. For this, he offers his own example; verf. 26, 27. The same thing does he speak here to *Timothy*. All true saints that are successfull racers, and good souldiers, run not uncertainly; nor fight, as beating the air, so as to gain nothing by running and fighting, but, are sure of the prize. And this, by bringing their body or natural man into subjection, which evidences the power they run and fight in, to be the Gospel-spirit of Christ. The body or whole natural man, in the saint, is by this all-powerful spirit of Christ, to be fought down, and brought under, as an enemy, in its own whole life, course, will, and way; and so, fetched over into Christs party, in due subjection to, and harmony with the spiritual mind of Christ, in him. All that run, fight and strive, in the activity and power of their renewed natural spirit, do not run or strive lawfully for the true prize, or incorruptible crown; nor ever will find it. Many will thus seek and strive to enter in at the strait gate and not be able. Those that aim to reign as Kings, with the rich and ful *Corinthians*, or bewitched *Galatians*, in holy flesh, satan is ready to establish and crown them there, in a state of unchangable enmity to God, and his Gospel-spirit. The body, they should bring under the true reigning spirit of Christ, they keep up, in direct enmity thereunto. Such mysticall kings or princes of this world, crucified Christ, because he would not king it with them there. That they keep up for king, is to be crucified, in order to any mans reigning with Christ, or being saved. The lawfull striving for the true crown and prize, is the denial of mans own will, through-out, as to any thing that is worldly; yea, the giving up his whole changable state of life, in sacrifice to God. So will he be temperate, moderate, and sober, in a sinless use of worldly necessities, without any thing of inordinate affection. Others, that strive in their own will, and forbidden life, strive in a direct rebellion against God and Christ, and union with the devil. *They enter not by the door into the sheep-fold, but climb up another way. Such are thieves and robbers; Jo. 10.* All such running and fighting will be found to be but beating the air; they'l have no success, as to true blessedness, or acceptance with God.

Verf. 6. *The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits.*

Or, as the *Aethiopick* reads, labours, before he receives the fruit. Saints must pass under Christ's husbandry, by the dispensation of his crosse, or Gospel-plow; on their mysticall earth, or natural spirit, which, at best, is but fallow ground to God, brings forth no fruit to him, till in that newnes of life, which springs up from the incorruptible seed thereof, on the decay, losse, and abolition of the natural.

So,

So, only can herbs, or fruits, meet for, and acceptable to him that dresses them, be brought forth in their earth. And so will they receive blessing from God; *Heb. 6. 7.* Thus God has the glory, man nothing to boast of, but abundance to rejoyce in. But while man brings forth fruit to himself (*Hos. 10. 1.*) In his own reitorred righteous life, will and way, he seeks his own Glory, and, if he finally persist so doing, will lie down in sorrow, and everlasting contempt. This gets man by walking in but the light and wisdom of his own spirit; *Ezay 50. 11.* And they that are brought into the darkness and death of that, and trust in the new name or Gospel spirit of the Lord, will be found the true children of light; *vers. 10.* The loss of our holy flesh, for the life of Gods Holy Spirit, abolishes mans vain-glorying in the flesh, and becom's everlasting salvation to him, in the spirit. The same spirit that kill's holy flesh, or takes away the righteous life of man, gives and sets up its own life, and the everlasting righteousness of God, in him. True saints, by stirring up the spiritual gift in them, mortify that holy flesh, others set up as an Idol of jealousy, against God's holy spirit, to their eternal ruine. Their eye does not pity, neither will they spare this darling-self, in its best dress and ornaments, in reference to the prize they run and fight for, a life of everlasting righteousness, and an incorruptible crown. The saint, putting his hand to the plow of the cross, and joyning with Christ in this mystical husbandry on his natural spirit; is also the husbandman, sowing in the tears of his natural, that shall reap joy to his spiritual and whole man; *Pf. 126. 5, 6.* This is figured by the littoral husbandman; *Jam. 5. 7, 8.* They must have long patience, and after all their labour, shall receive the fruits thereof. The gradual progress towards the full ripe fruit and spiritual harvest, is figuratively charactered, *Mar. 4. 28.* *First the Blade, then the Ear, then the full corn in the Ear, and then the Harvest.* Saints, after all running and fighting by the spirit of the Cross, to bring down their natural man into subjection thereunto, must exercise their faith and patience, in waiting for the early and latter rain of the spirit of Christ upon them, for ripening its own seed into the powerful life and abundant fruitfulness thereof, in them, and giving them compleat victory over all enemies.

Verf. 7. Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

'Tis the duty of saints, rightly to consider of spiritual truths and exhortations, when heard by them; and wait on Christ, for the full understanding of their concern, therein. They must take heed how, as well as what they hear; that they hear right Gospel-words, and that they take them right, in the full significancy and intendment thereof. This can be done, only in their spiritual discerning, or new intellect. The best wisdom of man, will miss all. Man, in that, is the unbeliever, stranger and enemy, as to all Gospel-truths. The voice or words thereof, true saints are not to hear or regard, as Gospel. *Paul*, in the wisdom of God, had spoken the highest spiritual truths to *Timothy*; and then bids him consider of them.

saints of lower degree, are to consider of highest spiritual truths, spoken by those of higher degree, in Gospel-light and life, though yet unacquainted with them. *Mary* pondered in her mind those sayings of Christ, which were yet beyond the comprehension of her present capacity, waiting for, and earnestly desiring, what *Paul* here prays for, on behalf of *Timothy*, that the Lord would give her the full understanding of his mysterious words, and spiritual truths. For, the right knowledge thereof, can, no otherwise, be attained. *Mary* sat, in a holy silence, at *Jesus's* feet, waiting for this, even the full meaning of his words. Her desire to know his mind, was with design to do his will. And the more any do his will, will they know his mind, *John 7. 17.* This *Paul* puts *Timothy* upon, to ponder the high spiritual truths (by him declared) in that spirit, that qualifies him for doing, as well as more fully knowing and preaching the mind of Christ, to others.

[Vers. 8. Remember, that *Jesus Christ*, of the seed of *David*, was raised from the dead, according to my Gospel.

Paul here sums up all he had said, and which he would have *Timothy* consider of; all that Gospel, by him owned and preached. Christ took our nature, to suffer death therein, as to the changable life of its body and spirit; and out of such both literal and mystical death, rais'd it into an everlasting righteous life. So did he accomplish the will of God declared in Scripture, by sacrificing our changable nature, at best, and raising it into that unchangable creature-life, that's in unchangable union with the divine. And by this entering with our nature into the spiritual life and Glory he had with his Father, in his everlasting righteous creature-spirit, before the world was (*Prov. 8. 22, 23.*) did he both set open, and actually pour forth the same, on his followers. Our nature, in him, glorified, and possessed of his own everlasting creature-life and also divine, exhibits both his divine and new-creature-glories, in a discernable visibility, to the new-understanding, erected in Saints, by the actual pouring forth of that new-creature spirit, into them. He that is the glorious object, gives the eye suited thereunto. Else, still, all would be invisible. His revealing himself to us, is the setting up and opening an understanding in us, that can take his discoveries. The man Christ, as possessed of all divine and creature-life and glory, is the adequate Object of spiritual faith, for Saints everlasting salvation. And he declares it his Fathers pleasure, he should give eternal life, to them. As a certain pledge, for their full assurance of hope, herein, are they always to remember and consider, that Christ took our nature in its changable life of the Law, and crucified, and raised it into his everlasting Gospel-life. The preaching this, and shewing us, in his example, the only way into the same Gospel-life; by the like death of Nature, in our persons, is the true preaching of his Gospel. He calls his true saints and souldiers to no other hardship to nature, in them, then what he has eminently undergone, himself. They must follow the Lamb in his suffering steps, whithersoever he goes, through a total death of nature, as to the changable life of the Law, into the everlasting life of the Gospel. All that obediently submit to the

the death of the former, will by the same mighty power of God, be raised into the latter, that raised him from the dead. All true saints are constantly to remember and eye Christ, as raised from the death of a changable, into an unchangable, and everlasting righteous-creature-life, as the first fruits; afterward, they that are his, at his second coming, are to be raised in Body, Soul, and Spirit, all the essential ingredients of their constitution and so changed and shifted out of their vile, naturall, changable first-creation life and state, into the likeness of his Glorious body, even our whole nature, in a state of everlasting life, and true blessedness; 1 Cor. 15. 23. and Phil: 3. 21. Saints faith and hope, as to everlasting salvation, is built on this resurrection state of life, in Christ, in order to which, their death, as to all other life, is required. The true remembering him, herein, imports their free consent, to be crucified with him, in all that can die, that they may live with him, in that state, wherein he lives, for evermore; Rev. 1. 18. So will they answer the design of God, in Christs coming, suffering, dying, and rising in our nature, as their absolute salvation. This everlasting creature-life, and way to it, by death, is the summe of all true Gospel-preaching. By such death, as to all that's mortal, did Christ bring his Gospel-life of immortality to light in our nature, and exhibits it to us, as in the same way, attainable.

Ve. 9. Wherein I suffer trouble as an evil doer, even unto bonds. But the word of God is not bound.

On this honourable account, was Paul persecuted, as an evil doer; But, in this trouble, he experienced this joyful truth, that the word of God is not bound. He suffer'd for preaching, that Christ of the seed of David, by the death of our nature as to the first-covenant righteous life of the law, raised it, into the everlasting life of the Gospel. In this sense, he said to King Agrippa, *Why should it be thought incredible, that God should raise the dead?* Act. 26. 8. They that deny this resurrection-state of everlasting life, assert that which indeed is but a changable first-covenant life, to be a state of everlasting salvation. This their accursed other Gospel, render's them flat enemies to the Cross of Christ, and all the true Gospel-words of that life, that is salvation. They reckon, with the young man and Laodicea, they lack nothing for eternal life, when they lack all; and must quit all they have, for it. This resurrection out of the death of the natural spirit, as to the earthly, changable life of the Law, into the everlasting life of the Gospel, Christ prov'd Abraham Isaac, and Jacob, to be in, and thereby, silenced the Sadducees. They were departed out of a first-covenant life, and lived with God by faith in the second. And this also implies the certainty of the resurrection of their bodies. As to this complete resurrection of the whole man, body and spirit, Christ is the first fruits. They that deny the resurrection of both, or either, do err, not knowing the truth of scripture, nor power of God; Mat. 22. 23, 34. Peter and John declared, before the People and council of the Jews, that he, they crucified, was risen, into that new Life and Name, in which alone any can be saved. This is in-

censured the Council, *That they charged them, with threatnings, to teach no more, in that Name of Jesus.* The only teachers and professors of scripture, straitly command *Peter and John*, not to preach the Gospel-truth of those very scriptures they owned as the Oracles of God; *Act. 4. 1, 20.* Such preaching did *cut the professing Jews to the heart*, on which, they *gnashed their teeth on Steven* (as a prophetic Prologue to their everlasting gnashing of teeth) *cried with a loud voice, stopped their ears, ran upon him, with one accord, and stoned him; Act. 7. 54, 58.* Death, as to first-covenant life, and resurrection into the second, this preached by *Paul*, was the only ground of his outward sufferings, as an evil-doer. All Gospel-truths, by the highest wisdom of man, in first-covenant Jew or Gentile, are reckoned the greatest errors and blasphemies, in the world. Gospel-doctrine is a way every where spoken against, and decried, by all first-covenant professors, in what ever variety of form, discipline or persuasion, as to some points; they agree in the main; all build on the sandy first-covenant principles, for salvation. They are all against the Rock, the Gospel-spirit of Christ, and every word of it. Thus *Herod and Pilate* could joyn, as friends, against Christ, though otherwise, at some odds. There was no other ground of *Pauls* accusation and suffering, but the right Gospel-confession of his faith, concerning Christ; *Act. 24. 13, 16.* He and other Apostles, rejoiced, as counted worthy to suffer shame on this account; *Act. 5. 41. Col. 1. 24.* *Paul* challenged all his accusers and enemies, to declare if they could charge him with any thing, but the testimony he gave concerning Christ, which is exactly according to their own Law and prophets. *Act. 24. 17, 21.* For this very cause, the Jews caught him in the Temple, and went about to kill him, even for no other thing, then saying, what *Moses* and their prophets had said, should come; that Christ should suffer and be the first that should be raised from the dead, and so cause his Gospel-light to shine, upon a first-covenant people, and also to the corrupt Gentile; *Act. 26. 21, 23.* The Jews laid many grievous complaints against him, before *Festus*, but could prove nothing, while he answered for himself, *Neither against the Law of the Jews, Temple, or Cesar, have I offended any thing at all; Act. 25. 8.* And on *Festus* his offer, he chose rather a trial before heathen *Cesars* judgment seat, at Rome, then first-covenant professors, at Jerusalem. These went several times about to kill him; Cesar permitted him to dwell two whole years, in his own hired house at Rome, and freely receive and preach the Kingdom of God, and things that concern the Lord Jesus Christ, to all that came to him, with all confidence, and without any the least prohibition; *Act. 28. 30, 31.* Did not *Paul* make the better choice? The same first-covenant-spirited generation of professors, are sowed with the same leaven of the Pharisees, into the same enmity to all Christs Gospel-truths, as much, if not more, now, than they then, though under the title, *Christian*, and professors of the Gospel. The true Gospel-preaching of death, to that first-covenant state (they rest in for salvation) in order to their being raised into Christs everlasting Gospel-life, is as offensive now, or more, then to the Jews, and decried as blasphemy or evil speaking against the Law; a making the righteous life thereof not only not signify so much as they take it for, but just nothing at all, as to eternal life.

True

True Gospel-doctrine pulls up by the roots all their false hopes and confidences for salvation. Will this be born, by the many that are called into the first-covenant, who will not be obedient to the second? On this single account, the professing Jews crucified Christ, and persecuted his Apostles. They call in heathen Magistrates to their assistance, against Christ and his spiritual anointed ones. So, the heathen rage, and, a first-covenant People, imagine a vain thing, against them, *Psal. 2. 1, 2.* But, their turn will come, to sit in judgment, and execute vengeance on them both, at last. *This honour have all his saints; Psal. 149. 6, 9.* In the morning of Christs second appearing, in his resurrection-glory, shall the true spiritual upright have dominion over all, that under satans reign, all along this world, have exercised a tyrannical dominion, over them; *Psal. 49. 14.* The method, by which earthly Jerusalem professors, among Jews or Gentiles, have proceeded against Christ himself, and true saints, has been, by forgery, to accuse them of treason against worldly *Cesars* or civil Magistrates, and so, hurry them out of the world, in a tumultuous noise (that are the quietest and most harmless subjects to *Cesar*) without any colour of regular proceeding. *Crucify him, Crucify him. Away with such a fellow from the earth, It is not fit he should live any longer in the world; Act. 22. 22.* This, say they of such, whom God thinks the world no longer worthy of; *Heb. 11. 28.* 'Tis one uniform legal-spirited generation, from the beginning of the world, to the end, from *Cain*, downwards, that being fixed in unchangeable enmity to the Gospel-spirit of the second covenant, persecutes the true spiritual anointed ones of God. The true Gospel-testimony is a sword, run into their very spirits, cutting their very hearts, and laying dead all their false hopes of eternal life, in that state, they chuse to rest in, for it. This is exceedingly provoking, yet gives no just cause of offence to them. But on this, they run the literal sword at their bodies. And that is the utmost they can do, which Christ requires his followers, no more to fear, than he did; but him, only, that can cast body and soul, into Hell. Heres a comfort; in all saints sufferings, on this account, they experience with *Paul*, that the word of God is not bound, though the witnesses of it, be. Christs Gospel-life, in himself or them, is incapable of bonds, loss, or change. It renders all the possessors of it, Christs everlasting free-men. The inward natural man, or spirit, at best, must be captived imprisoned and put to death; lose all its freedom, or free-will, to live in Gods; The tickle versatile freedom of the sons of men, must go, for the glorious liberty of the sons of God, with which the son of God, makes men free, indeed, for ever, to good only, and that of the right kind, spiritual, and heavenly, in harmony with the free will of God himself. That al-powerfull spiritual life, in which Christ is the living word of God, is always the same, yesterday, to day, and for ever; from everlasting to everlasting. It was set up from everlasting (*Pro. 8.*) blasts all other life and abides it self, for ever; *Esay 40. 6, 8.* No man or Angel, in fleshly or changeable first-creation-life, can enter the kingdom of God; all that, is but as flesh, or grass; *1 Cor. 15. 50.* Resting or fixing in that, is certain damnation. The seed of the living word, in man, is incorruptible, so is the life, 'tis quickened into, and so are all

all the good works and fruits, done and brought forth in it; whereas vanity is written on the corruptible seed and transient life, with all its works, and fruits. This life of the living word, is that, which by the Gospel is preached to men, as their absolute salvation; 1 Pet. 1. 23, 25. The life of this living word, in him, Paul found to be above all bonds or death. And he found a continual increase in it, by Christs daily communication to him. No enemies, devils or men, can lay chains on this, or touch it, in Christ or Saints. So, in this, their glorying and rejoicing remains clear and full. No stranger or enemy, can intermeddle with or interrupt this joy in the Lord, this rejoicing in Christ Jesus, the living Word of God; Joh. 16. 22. Prov. 14. 10. And all distress, brought by enemies on the natural man of Saints, removes that, that hinders their speedier growth up in that life, that is the foundation of their true joy, and so increases their joy.

Verf. 10 Therefore I endure all things for the Elects sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal Glory.

Here's a farther account of Paul's high value of Christ, in that life, in which he is the living Word of God. This, not only for the benefit of it, to himself, but earnest desire that others may partake thereof, as an evident proof of his great and true love to them. This is another reason of his willingness to pass through all sorts of persecution, tribulations, and imprisonments, in witnessing Christs Gospel-life, that he may be signally serviceable to Christ, in reference to his Elect; in order to their attaining that salvation, which is in Christ Jesus with eternal Glory. In this high concern, he desired to be serviceable to others, not only by faithful preaching the Gospel, and declaring the whole counsel of God, about the true way of salvation to men, but by becoming also, an encouraging example to them, in those inward and outward tribulations they would be called to, for the said life and Truth of Christ (when owned and professed by them) which alone is salvation, and that exceeding weight of eternal glory, that the utmost sufferings of their natural man without or within are not worthy to be compared with; Rom. 8. 18 2 Cor. 4. 16, 17. Paul, finding this, was willing to endure the utmost hardships to his natural man, as a good soldier of Christ, as also for the Elects sakes, to whom he rejoiced in being exemplarily serviceable, the same. He witnesses Christs Gospel-life to them; and shewed them, in his example, what must be undergone by them, as well as him, in order to their happy partaking thereof. They must follow his suffering steps as he Christ; else will they not follow his Gospel-doctrine of the Cross, on the best life of nature, for the everlasting life of the Gospel and grace of God.

Verf. 11. It is a faithful saying; For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him.

Paul here confirms the truth of his obedience, and love to Christ, wherein performed. He declares the utmost sufferings outward or inward, of his natural man, required

required by the spiritual law of God, to be deligned in greatest love, from God, for his highest good. For the life he requires our ceasing from, by death, can never make us truly happy : yea, in the highest restored righteousness of it, since the fall, is found in direct enmity to that, which can. God therefore takes away that faulty first-covenant-life, by the Cross, that he may give us the second. By the death of that, that's in enmity to God and their true good, he gives that which will make them the friends of God, and for ever blessed. They that die with Christ in the first, shall live with him in the second. The ground and reason why God requires the one, is to qualify and capacitate us, for receiving the other. If conformed to Christ in his death, as to the former life, we shall be like him in the second, by resurrection ; *Rom. 6. 5.* That the only way to gain the latter, is the obedient losing the former, Christ has writen out, in his own exemplary practice. Sharing with Christ in the latter, abundantly over-recompences all loss in the former. This true Gospel-traffique, the exchange of a temporal life for eternal, is the highest gain imaginable. Law-traffique with Satan, in selling or parting with all regard or hopes of the latter, when convincingly shewed and offered, to be established in the former, is the greatest loss imaginable ; eternal death to all such foolish Merchants. The sanctifying death-rouch of Christs Gospel-spirit on our natural, Law-spirit, sublimates and transforms us into a life, transcendently more excellent than man or angel were possessed of, by the first-creation.

By this, are men made joynt-heirs with Christ, of God. By suffering with him, in that Life, they never can be so ; they'l be raised into that, wherein they ever will be so ; *Rom. 8. 17.* *If they suffer with him, they shall be glorified with him.* The death of our narrow mortal state, makes way for that extended new-creation capacity, that qualifies for the enjoyment of such high blessedness. God himself becomes our lot and inheritance, in the vision of his divine glory. This can no other wise be given or received, but in Christs everlasting creature-life : and this no otherwise partaken of, than by death of our natural state, at best. If we die with him in our mortal, first-covenant life, we live with him in his immortal, second-covenant life. The joy of this latter, set before us, should cause us to rejoyce in all the hard discipline on us, in the former. This is one of the faithful and true sayings of Christs spiritual Law of the Cross, upon nature, at best. Others follow.

Verf. 12. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him : If we deny him, he will also deny us.

Saints suffering with Christ, is the only appointed way for reigning with him. Christ took our nature, at best, and sacrificed it. This thing was written in the Volume, or Book of God's divine mind, that he should so do ; *Heb. 10. 7, 9.* This is the acceptable Gospel-sacrifice in Christ and saints, clean man. In Law-sacrifices, clean beasts, God had no pleasure. They were but instructing types of the Gospel-sacrifice. Christs obedience to his Father, herein, was a teaching example to his followers, who can, no otherwise, passe into the glory he now is in, then he did.

did. His Gospel-spirit denied and threw up the *filles* natural desire of his law's spirit, with a *No: my will be done.* He did not pity or spare himself, as satan by *Peter* tempted him, to do : nor did the Father spare his only son, in this case ; *Ro.* 8. 32. Nor will Christ spare his children, the Father has given him. That life they cannot reign with him, must go, for that, in which they can. In the former they cannot see the whole mind of God in the scriptures, nor steddily obey that little they see. In the latter, they are infallible seers of the whole mind, and doers of the whole will of God. Man walks but after his own heart, in the first-covenant : after Gods, only in the second. Christ himself declares, he took the first, to suffer, being but that in which he could do nothing ; and, that in the second, his Father had committed all rule and judgment to him. The son can do nothing of himself in his first-covenant life of the law ; Then addes, *The Father judges no man.* Who then must judg ? The holy Ghost, or the son in his everlasting righteous Gospel-spirit and life ; *Jo.* 5. 19, 27. In his law-life, he refused to be called *Good*, or be a King. *Who made me a Ruler or Judge*, in this ? Not God. Man would. The very *Jews* would have made him a King, in that, and he refused. Then they accused him, as making himself a King, in another life and state, and so forced *Pilate* to crucify him, though himself was convinced that such a King as he asserted himself to be, clashed not with *Cesares* interest, nor rendred him guilty of any fault, at all, against him. By his death, as son of man on earth, in the first-covenant, he became unchangably one with the son of man in heaven, in the second. In this state, is he the infallible knower and doer of the whole will of God, towards saints and sinners. He will give distinct respective recompences to all in love or wrath. He suffered the whole will of God, in his first-covenant state, that he might do it, in the second. And by passive obedience with him, in the first (which is the highest obedience performable therewith) can saints be brought to perform active obedience, with him, to Gods wel-pleasing, and their salvation, in the second. If they so suffer with him, under satans and mans reign, in the former, they shall appear with him in the visible glory of the latter, at his reign, in the sight of all enemies. They must lose the former life, in the highest wisdom whereof, they know not what they worship or do : in the latter, they fully know his mind and do his will. No worshipping God in spirit and truth, but in his Gospel-spirit, that is truth and no lie.

If we deny him, he will also deny us.

If we deny or refuse his Gospel-spirit of everlasting righteousness, when convincingly shewed and offered us, in its own light, with the terms of receiving it, he will deny and reject us, as willful haters of his spirit of truth, sinners against the holy Ghost, the most criminal workers of iniquity. But they that confesse, own and receive his spirit, on his terms, as true followers of his example, he will confesse and own before his Father and holy Angels, who did follow the example of this glorious lead, into his resurrection-life ; *Mat.* 10. 32. 33. *Luk.* 12. 8, 9. They that deny his Gospel-spirit, deny and refuse all his Gospel-truth. And when
Christ

Christ presents them to God, under his just accusation and undeniable charge against them, will God swear in his wrath, they shall never enter into his rest.

Verf. 13. If we beleeve not, yet he abideth faithfull, he cannot deny himself.

There's a time, saints have been unbelievers as well as others, yet God in his steady purpose and promise, cannot deny himself, or faile, in accomplishing his gracious designs, upon them. Saints, for a time, dream not of, or beleeve any such thing, as a Gospel-life, distinct from that of the law, the only salvation; nor, of the means of attaining it, the death of the other. Christ will make good his engagement to God, in quickning up his spiritual seed in them, and so, giving eternal life to as many as the father has given him. Though they, for a season deny that life, he will not deny or faile to give it them. *Paul* in the life of the law, did, a long while, think all safe for salvation, when he knew nothing of it; Yea, thought he did God service, in zeal for the life he had, to persecute the Gospel-spirit of everlasting life. These days of saints ignorance and spiritual darkness, in their corrupt or righteous spirit of nature, God winks at, seeing, all a long, his own seed of spiritual life, at bottom, in them, unknown to themselves. Though they beleeve no such thing, he abideth faithfull; cannot deny himself, but will carry on his design upon them. When he quickens up his latent, dormant seed, into life, as in *Paul*, he makes them actual believers; pardoning all their former unbelief, proceeding from ignorance and inadvertency, as to any such Gospel-life, signified in the scriptures of truth. This affords comfort and great hopefulness to men, in the corrupt or reformed spirit of their own nature, while strangers to that life, in which alone they can please God, or be saved.

Verf. 14. Of these things put them in remembrance, Charging them before the Lord, that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.

Paul here charges *Timothy*, as to his duty, in preaching Gospel; and that, in reference to the hearers thereof. He is to mind them of the things, *Paul* mind's him, of. He is to charge them solemnly before the Lord, that they strive not about words, to worse then no profit, great hurt, as tending to the subverting of the hearers of the Gospel. What words do thus? Such as affirm the life of the law, to be absolute salvation. These are of signal disadvantage to men. And, by striving about such words, for maintaining of them, is signified, an endeavour to set up the life of the Law, against that of the Gospel. This turns Gods first-covenant law, into man and satans accursed Gospel. Their twisted and combined humane and serpentine wisdoms and words, are engaged in carrying on this destructive work, in a lying spirit of divination and false prophecy. They prophesy and promise salvation, in a spirit, its never to be found in; and deny the only spirit, wherein it is to be found.

found. They set up letter, figure, shadow, righteousness of man in the image of the earthly, in direct opposition to spirit, substance, grace, truth, and the everlasting righteousness of God, in the image of the heavenly. Saints are to hate, lose, abandon and give up to death, all they contend for and preach. For they will be found fighters against God, and so great salvation as is offered them. They preach up only that, that's to be destroyed, and so will be found the most criminal of all transgressors; enemies to the cross of Christ. They contend against their own salvation; preach and dispute themselves into eternal death, the sad recompence of all their learned pains. Such strivers are rebels against God, highly hurtful to themselves and hearers, denying and exploding all gospel-truths, as diabolical enthusiasms. Thus do they labour to fright people, from listening to one right word of Gospel. So their accursed other Gospel passes current, without any scruple or contradiction. They teach men to sin after the similitude of *Adams* transgression, that is, unpardonably, as their only way for salvation. They teach the keeping up the changeable righteous life of the law, in the first creation, represented by the tree of good and evil, against the everlasting life of the Gospel, represented by the tree of life. And then, let the death of Christ be confined only to his body (and the mystical death of his natural spirit or living soul, as to the life of the law, be denied) the only conformity to Christ in his death, that is truly saving, will utterly be denied. So, all Christ's Gospel-doctrine, on all hands, is pulled up by the roots. At the rate of their Gospel, devils and men that have kept up the fading life, they were first created in, in unchangeable enmity to the other, have performed their duty. And then, Christ and his followers, from amongst Angels or men, that have parted with it, are the sinners. Self-confident, fast-holders of their own righteousness, called Christ himself, on this very account, blasphemers, mad, and said, he had a devil. Thus Christ and his followers are counted fools and mad-men, as the only criminal party, and the devil and his party of Angels and men, not guilty, if you'll believe them. Christ's appearing with all his Saints and Angels, in the visibility of his yet hidden, spiritual, Gospel-life, will decide this grand controversy, to the stopping of every mouth of iniquity. A deceitful, general, undistinguishing preaching of Christ, and righteousness (without giving ayme at two distinct lives, and righteousnesses, in first and second covenant, both which are dispensed from Christ's hand, to men) deceives the hearers, and spoiles all. Hearers are, hereby, exposed to a condennment resting in the first, which is unchangeable enmity to the second. Yea, they charg them, not to listen after one right word of the second. Thus do they bewitch and play the sorcerers towards their hearers, as *Elymas*, that ceased not to pervert the right Gospel-words and way of the Lord, and to turn them from the faith of the Gospel, as he, *Sergius Paulus* the Deputy of *Cyprus*, from *Pauls* doctrine; *Act. 13. 4. 12.*

Verf. 15. Study to shew thy self approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Shew thy self a skilful work-man, a right preacher of the Gospel, by dividing and distinguishing these two sorts of life, in first and second covenant, both which are the gifts of Christ, to men; and declared in the scriptures of truth. Call each by its right name, as Charactered in scripture. Call the first, worldly, earthly, fleshly, oldness of letter, figure, shadow, a fading flower, a perishing vanity; &c. Call the other, spiritual, heavenly, newness of life, spirit, grace, substance, truth, everlasting righteousness, durable riches, love; &c. Strive not for the former, against the latter, but, might and main, contend for and labour after the latter; and for it, hate and reject the former. This is to be the study and care of Gospel-preachers, by which, to approve themselves skilful and able workmen, as rightly dividing the word of truth. Christ, the living word of God, had the first-covenant-life himself, in the changable state of it. He never suffered it to rebel against the second; but, by an obedient death, translated it into the everlasting life of, and union with the second. So, in him, they dwell for ever together, as brethren, in unity. And, his followers, by quitting the first, in its changable state, find their own again, with usury, and unspeakable gain, in everlasting union with the second, by way of resurrection. The right stating these two lives, and shewing the only way for a happy transition or transplantation out of the former, into unchangable union with the latter, is true Gospel-preaching, and shewing the true way of salvation, to men. Such preachers will never need to be ashamed. For whatever shame and reproach they lie under, from a spirit of falsehood, in men, they know they are approved of God.

Verf. 16. But shun profane and vain babblings, for they will encrease unto more ungodliness.

All strivings and disputings for the life of the law against the Gospel, are profane and vain babblings. They that so do, after Gospel-conviction, manifest themselves, to be subverted, and labour to subvert others, by turning them from the Gospel-lie and doctrine of Christ. All their labour, herein, is wilful rebellion against the known command of God. And, as a farther aggravation of their folly and madness, they strive, under, a known impossibility of ever finding what they pretend to seek, eternal life, in the principles of a fading mortal state. By this vain babbling, obstinately persisted in, they will encrease unto more ungodliness; under the form of godliness, daily multiplying their rebellious actings against the power thereof, till absolutely and unpardonably fixed, in enmity thereunto. Such babbling is also called profane, as managed in a known enmity and daring opposition to God himself. An absolute fixure in this course, is the highest pitch of profanes and ungodliness, they can, most unhappily, arrive at.

Verf. 17. *And their word will eat as doth a canker; of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus.*

Verf. 18. *Who, concerning the truth, have erred, saying, that the resurrection is past already: and overthrow the faith of some.*

Her's an account of the said prophane mind of vain babblers, in the persons, here mentioned. Their word or whole expreffion of their evil mind, eats as a canker or gangreen, which, in letter, is a dangerous difeafe, of an over-spreading nature, corrupting every part, and fo destroying the whole body. A mind, thus corrupted from the fimplicity that is in Chrift (or fingle chafte eye to his Gofpel-fpirit of everlasting righteousnefs and truth, by lufing after the forbidden fruit, fatan offers to gratify them with, in the firft covenant life of their own fpirit) does more and more corrupt them, caufing them to encrease in fpiritual wickednefs, till grown to a full ftature in the fpirit of the devil. Thus does this myftical canker, poifon and corrupt the fpirit of man, ftep by ftep, till the top-ftone be laid, in unchangable enmity to God. Such were *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, who erred concerning the truth, which implies their former acknowledgment of it. Their error was, that the refurrection is paff, already. This fhews, their own faith in Chriffs Gofpel-fpirit of truth, under Gofpel-light, deftroyed in them, and their endeavour to corrupt and deftroy others, alfo. They hold the refurrection, already paff, or that they have the true refurrection life, and fo, abfolute falvation, in the firft-covenant-life, to the utter exclusion of the fecond. On this moft falfe hypothefis, all true Gofpel-preaching is vain, and faith built thereon, nothing; and all perifh that relie upon it; fo, are of all men moft miserable. For, they quit all other life and things, for a Gofpel-ftate, which, if a fable, they are gone on all hands, in this world and next, too. Thus *Paul* argues; *1 Cor.* 15. 12, 19. But, fays he, Chrift is rifen, out of the death of that, they call a refurrection-ftate, into that which indeed is fo, which the faith of all faints is built upon. Confequently, the denying this, overthrowes the faith and falvation of all true faints, and all the witnefs, given in the fpirit of Chrift, therero. But they that thus fay, will themfelvs, in conclufion, be found of all men, moft miserable, as the greateft and worft of all finners. True faints Gofpel-doctrine, races the fandy foundation, and pulls up the roots of all their falfe hopes of falvation, in the firft-covenant: and they race the foundation and pull up by the roots, what in them lies, all their hopes of bleffednefs, in the fecond. Thus are Chriffs true, and mans falfe Gofpel, in point-blank contradiction, in every word, ftriking at the very root of all one anothers hopes of falvation. True Gofpel-preachers, with *Paul*, declare two things: Firft, that Chrift died, as to the firft-covenant life of the law, in our nature; and, fecondly, that he raifed it into the everlasting life of the fecond. His death atoned for the fin of all man-kind, in the firft. But a far-higher end of his death, was the railing our nature, into an everlasting righteous life, in the fecond *Adam*; *1 Cor.* 15. 2, 4. This is the testimony of the fpirit

Spirit of God, through-out the whole scripture; that Christ should thus take our nature, and by the death of it, in the fact, raise it into the life of the second covenant. That earthly life of the law, man preaches salvation in Christs Gospel-spirit speaks fire and sword, war and death, to. This earthly life, and mans earthen vessel or spirit, therein, is found in enmity to Christs heavenly, Gospel-spirit, which is filth of spirit, no otherwise to be cleansed, but by breaking the earthen vessel, as was typed, *Levit. 11. 33.* Those that thus deny the true Gospel resurrection-life, go to work another way, for interpreting all such Gospel-words, as cros, death, regeneration, resurrection, &c: The cros of Christ, they reckon falls upon the corrupt spirit and life of nature, and quickens man up into the lost righteous life thereof. Heres their death, regeneration and resurrection. So, in the but restored first-covenant-life, they say, the resurrection, and so all bitterness of death, is past, as *Agag* said, when death was at his door. Here's the utmost extent of death and resurrection, they'll allow the scripture to mean. So, fortify themselves against all Gospel-doctrine. They reckon, they have got all, in their restored life of the law. Though this life was changable in the first *Adam*, yet, when restored by the second, unchangable. This they say, though the second *Adam* crucified this very life, in his own person, and evidently set himself before their eys, in Gospel-light, as crucified, therein. Thus does satan winde his serpentine head into them, and assures them, they are now possessed of Christ, to all intents and purposes, for ever. All is safe; *Ye shall not die at all.* Man aims at establishment here, which is not the second *Adams* counsell to him, nor workmanship in him; but, satans. So come they to a fixed reprobate or undiscerning mind, as to all spiritual, Gospel, heavenly things and truths, once by them known. This sort of lingers, that in first-covenant life, and second covenant light, have known their masters will, shall be beaten with many stripes, fall under a sorer condemnation and wrath, then fixed sinners of the *Gentiles*, in filth of flesh, that did not so know it. They reckon themselves conformable to Christ, in his death; when nothing is subdued in them, that Christ ever had, in him. The corrupt state and spirit of our nature he never took, or had. For then had he not been a spotles Lamb, for sacrifice. And as to the life, in which they reckon themselves past the cros, and death, in the resurrection; this is that, Christ crucified in the unstained purity of it, in himself. In the highest career of enmity to his cros, are they. They have followed him, but for mystical loaves, to feed at his first-covenant table, for adorning their own nature. They will not follow this Lamb, whither-soever he goes, through the death of this, into his everlasting creature-life; *Jo. 6, 26, 27.* There they leave him; turn back, and walk no more or farther with him. The design of this ruining error, is, to secure natures head from the cros and Gospel-sword of Christ. When nature is healed of the deadly wound, by the first sin, they'll hear of no death-blow upon it, again, as necessary to eternal life. Not a word of such doctrine will be listened to. Thus did such teachers overthrow the faith of some, in *Pauls* time; turned them from a faith in Christs Gospel-life; as *Elymas* would the *Deputy* of *Cyprus*. By saying the resurrection is past, in first-covenant-life, they deny the true resurrection-state,

in the second. These are the mystical Sorcerers, Whoremongers, Murderers, and Idolaters, that make, love, and let up their lie, or accursed Gospel, in enmity to the true, which excludes them for ever, from entering into the new-jerusalem City or Kingdom, Rev. 12.

Verf. 19. Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity.

Here's unspeakable comfort to Saints. Whatever errors, men or devils come with, in hopes to prevail on their natural man, the foundation of God stands firm and unmoveable. They have his privy-seal of everlasting approbation, upon them. The seed of his Gospel-spirit, is this foundation, laid in them, by the Lord himself. So, 'tis not in their own, or any others power, to frustrate or disappoint themselves or him, as to the blessednes, intended them. A life of everlasting righteousness was treasured up, for them, in Christ, before the world began, and the seed of it, cast into them, Eph. 1. 3, 4. Whatever dangers they are expos'd to, in their natural state, the foundation of God, in them, stands sure, his inviolable seed of an everlasting life, cast into them, in pursuance of his electing love, which is the supremum foundation of their blessednes. When the seed of this life is quickened in them, they know they are his, as he always knew them to be; Cant. 2. 16 6 3. and 7. 10. Nor one, that has this seed, shall be lost; Jo. 10. 28, 29. The gates of hell cannot prevail against them. Of what use, the due consideration hereof should be to them, he shewes, saying; and let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity. First, What name is this? Secondly, What's meant by naming it? Whence, as a third thing, Saints are required to depart from all iniquity. To the first, This is Christs new name, importing that new-creature-life, it belong to. This name is distinct from that he had, as son of man on earth, in the fleshly life of the law. This new name and life of Jesus of Nazareth, is that, in which alone, any can be saved; Act. 4. 12. In his other, he refused to be a King. In this, he will reign, over all. In this name and life, is he the son of God, in whom he is well-pleased; 2 Per. 1. 17. In this name, is he God the father's sealed one; Jo. 6. 27. And this new life and name derived to, and put upon saints, brings them under the same approbation-seal. They, in that life, do alwayes those things that please his and their Father. The perishing first covenant-life, never had Gods seal; nor man, therefore, true salvation in it. To the second. What's the naming this name of Christ? The owning of it, when by Christs convincing discoveries, revealed to us; So as to quit our name in a first-covenant life, for it. As the fruit of this, are we to depart from iniquity. First, What is meant by iniquity? Secondly by departing from it? To the first, Iniquity signifies not only the sinful state of mans degenerate nature, with all the desire, thought, word, action and evil fruits thereof, without God, Christ, or hope, in the world. All this is filth of flesh. But there is another and more mischievous sort of iniquity, called filth of spirit, in the renewed

renewed, righteous life of nature, even enmity to God and his everlasting righteous Gospel-spirit. Those that own the new name of Christ, are to depart from both these sorts of iniquity, all iniquity; *2 Cor. 7. 1.* And this imports a departure out of the very life of our nature, at best, in which enmity to God is so deeply rooted, as never to be slain, but life and all must go, for that everlasting Gospel-life, that makes men, with *Abraham*, the friends of God, for ever. The keeping up a first-covenant life, in a known opposition to the second, loses all. This is the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, or Gospel-spirit. But he that is shewed Christs Gospel-life, by Gospel-light, and hopes to be partaker thereof, must purify himself, as Christ is pure (*1 Jo. 3. 3.*) *Be holy as God is holy; Per. 1. 15, 16.* The death of nature, at best, in order to receive the everlasting life of Christs Gospel-spirit, is the only way to be so.

Verf. 20. But in a great House there are not only vessels of gold, and of silver; but also of wood, and of earth: some to honour and some to dishonour.

The whole world and all creatures in it, are Gods great House and Household; his own workmanship; created and maintained by him, and owe the service of their beings, to him. The Lord is the sovereign Potter, that has made them all, of the same lump, some to honour, others to dishonour; *Ro. 9. 21.* Angels and men, in the immortality of their beings, are these mystical Vessels of honour and dishonour. All men, in the changable, mortal life of the law, are of one lump of mystical clay, in the image of the earthy, as first-created in the righteousness of their natural beings. This mortal life of their immortal spirit, as well as the life of their bodies, with the receptive subjects of both, are character'd as made out of a lump of clay, wherein all are alike. But, here is a further thing. In this great House, or World, there are not only Vessels of Gold and Silver, but of Wood and Earth. By the distinguishing hand of God towards men, and their distinguishing demeanour towards him, some become Vessels of Gold and Silver; and some, of Wood and Earth. Consequently, several uses are made of them. Some are appointed to honour, and some to dishonour. The free gift of Christs immortal new-creature life, makes the difference of the vessels of mystical Gold and Silver, from those of Wood and Earth, according to his pleasure. New-creature or Gospel-life of immortality, is Gods own, that 'tis lawful to give to whom he will, as the unquestionable prerogative of his absolute power and sovereignty. New-creature life, is Gods own life, set up by his immediate divine workmanship, from everlasting, in unchangable union with his divine; *Pro. 8. 22, 23, 30.* This everlasting new-covenant life, God calls his own, in distinction from changable, first-covenant life, set up in men and Angels, by the first creation, which he calls their own. They are the work-manship of that creating creature-spirit, in Christ, that was it self the immediate workmanship of the divine. They were created in the changable, earthly, shadowy image of Gods righteousness, perfect, in its kind, by the unchangable creature-image thereof. This changable righteous first-covenant life of the law,

as set up in man by creation, or restored by redemption, is called man's own; though by God put upon him, and set up in him; *Ezek. 16. 14, 15.* By the light, where-with Christ, as redeemer, enlightens every man that comes into the world, which is first-covenant light, he gives them the prospect and view of that first-covenant righteous life, they were created in, and a power of returning there into, if they will. A restored freedom of will, attending such general light, capacitates all men, for a return into that kind of life, they were created in, which therefore is called the common and general salvation or deliverance out of the fall. Millions of men, do, notwithstanding all this, wilfully brutify themselves, and delight in the unruly lusts, unbridled passions, madneses, and extravagancies of their degenerate nature, making their sensual, bestial powers, masters of their rational, so as to force those that should be their rulers, to truckle under them, and become serviceable, to prog and cast about, how to fetch in provision, to gratify the lusts thereof. But some men make another choice, to have their rational powers masters of the sensual, which, while short of a first-covenant knowledg, and union with Christ, makes a moral honest Heathen. If this rise to a covenant-union with Christ, it makes a legal-Christian profession, in a state of common salvation. In all this, mans will is the chuser, and actor. But, as to special, everlasting salvation, the case is far otherwise. There, 'tis not of him that willeth, or runneth, in the activity, life, and power of his own will, but meerly and singly, of Gods will, who shews this great mercy to whom he please, in the unspeakable gift of everlasting, new-creation life; *Ro. 9. 15, 16.* The death of mans will, at best, a cessation from all the life and motion thereof, is indispensably required, as the only way and means, for partaking of, or receiving this unspeakable gift, the Gospel-pearl, that makes men, Gods Jewels; *Mal. 3. 17.* By the fresh setting up of first-covenant light and life, in man, by way of restoration, his mystical house, or immortal spirit, is reduced, in good degree, into its first-created order. Sensual powers in it, are brought into a dutifull subjection to, and orderly comportment towards the superiour, governing, rational powers. But all this comeliness and order, amounts but to the form of godliness, and righteousness of man, in the restored shadowy, earthly image of God, the first man was created in. All this therefore, set and kept up, in a presumptuous competition with, and opposition to the life and image of the heavenly, and the power of Godliness, or righteousness of God, therein, is turned into an idol of jealousy, and becoms the root of all mystical uncleanneses, spiritual whordoms, idolatries and abominations, in enmity to Gods divine, and everlasting creature-life; *Ezek. 16. 15.* And, accordingly will they be dealt with, that so do; *vers. 38.* All, man is or can do, in his own first-creation life, at best, has nothing to do, in the case of everlasting salvation; avails not any thing towards it (*Gal. 6. 15.*) is no motive or argument, at all, with God, for the bestowing of it. God requires a cessation from all freedom, life and motion of mans own will, in order to receive this unspeakable gift and mercy, from Gods own will.

While then, self-confident man reckons, he bids fair for eternal life, with the young man, in the most fruitful activity of his own nature, in the restored first-covenant,

covenant life thereof, he is in a flat-contrariety to God's thoughts, in the case, and to all the faithful sayings of his spiritual law. For this requires the obedient losing of that life, at best, with all the things thereof, in order to receive his newness of life, wherein to reign. Tis not in the nature of man, or any thing possible to be done in it, but by and in the grace of God, any are eternally saved; *Eph. 2. 8.* All, done by man in his own nature, will and way, with the very root or Principle thereof, all this must go, root and branch, the tree with the fruit, that we may receive that Gospel-spirit of grace, wherein alone we can be saved. This is eternal life, and the Kingdom of Heaven within men. Thus, all man's boasting and glorying is gone. The Lord has the whole Glory of his being saved. Is it not better for man to be saved, so as God may have all the Glory, then go boasting, and glorying in his holy flesh, to the chambers of eternal death? Is it not better to follow the slain lamb, in the halt, blind, maimed, yea fully crucified nature, into the kingdom of God, then to be cast into hell, whole, and unbroken by the Gospel-cross? *Mat. 5. 29, 30.* The immortal spirits and beings of Saints, by the single and double portion of Christ's Gospel-life of immortality, may fitly be resembled by those more excellent, durable mettals, silver and gold, as vessels of honour, fit for their masters use, in his new-creation temple, or sanctuary. These vessels of Gold and Silver, are distinguished in Gods great house, the first-creation-world, from those of wood and earth. Wood and earth fitly signify Angels and men, in their natural, first-creation make and purity of a first-covenant life. They were all but leaky vessels; and the life they were possessed of, unstable as water, a perishing vanity. How soon did all men, in and with the first, lose the water of a first-covenant life, and wine also of spiritual light, by which they saw the new-covenant-life of the second Adam, in the typical tree thereof. Mans immortal spirit, was the leaky, earthen vessel, that soon rendered it self, by its foolish choice, a broken Cistern, that could hold neither the said mystical water, or wine, put into it, by the creatour. He chose his own life, and the gratifying of that, in which himself was represented to himself, by the tree of good and evil, preaching to him, that he was yet possessed but of such good from God, as might be turned into evil by his own fault; this he chose, in preference to the everlasting Gospel-life of the second Adam, preached to him, in the tree of life. That he got, by this folly, was the losse of both, and all. So, became dead, as to all righteous life of God or man. The flaming sword, turning every way, does now so keep the way of the tree of life, that no man can come to eat thereof, but he must passe under this sword; *Gen. 3. 24.* This sword is the living word of God (*Heb. 4. 12.*) Christs new-creature Gospel-spirit of the crosse, that both kills, and offers up mans nature, in the mystical flames thereof, and so purifies and transforms mans first-creation earthen vessel, into new-creation gold, and silver. The same hand, of the great mystical potter that demolishes mans first built, moulds & fashions him, by a new-creation, into a spiritual vessel, or new bottle, fitted to hold the new-wine, or spirit of the kingdom. The priestly, gospel-spirit of Christ, plucks out & cuts off mans right eye, hand, and foot, takes away his best understanding, and power of working righteousness or walking righteously, in the first-cove-

nant-life of his own nature, in order to give him his own new eye or understanding, a new hand or power of working righteousness, and set him upon a new foot, for walking uprightly, according to the Gospel, in all well-pleasing to God. A new spiritual principle of life and action, does thenceforward become the root, from which he brings forth fruit unto God. This newness of life, can never be merited by any thing man can do in his former, which is called oldness of letter. God offers his own new-creature life, to all men. None misse it, but they that so prefer their own, before it, so as to keep it up, in unchangable opposition to it : None, but, they that prefer their earthen vessels and life, as Angels their wooden ones, to that fountain of living waters, Christs Gospel-spirit of everlasting life, which makes whom God pleases, vessels of Gold and Silver, vessels of honour, immortality and eternal life. All men and Angels were capacitated by the immortality of their beings, to be vessels of honour, in an immortality of life. But God makes some of them, so. Others, by their own fault, and then by Gods just judgment upon them, are made vessels of dishonour and everlasting contempt. Silver and Gold, vessels of honour, signify an elected number of men, and then a selected number out of the elect, that have the double portion of Christs spiritual-creature-life. They are all filled with living waters, from the fountain, according to their distinct spiritual capacities. The double-portioned saint, is capacitated for neerer approaches to, and fuller enjoyments of the infinite divinity ; as possessed of a portion in the supreme and most heavenly part of Christs new-creature life. Such are vessels of Gold. Others, possessed only of the Glorified earthly part thereof, are signified by vessels of Silver. Thus, in the litteral Sanctuary, the nearer God, or the holy of holies, the most holy figurative place, the more precious were the materials and workmanship. *The vail of the first Tabernacle, had Cherubims only on one side of it : and the sockets for the pillars, on which it hung, were Brass. The vail to the Holy of Holies had figures of the Cherubims, perfect, on both sides, and the sockets for the pillars on which it hung, were Silver ; Exod. 26. 32. 37.* All, destitute of the single or double portion of Christs spiritual life, which makes vessels of Silver or Gold, will be found vessels of dishonour, or of wood and earth. These vessels of wood and earth, incorrigibly wicked Angels and men, though rendred, by their own fault, vessels of dishonour, the great Lord and Master, of all creatures, in his universal house will make use of them, to his own honour and everlasting praise. This is implied in that interrogatory ; *Rom. 9. 21, 23.* Of the same universal lump of mystical clay (the immortal beings of Angels and men, in their changable, earthly, first-creation-life, fitly called clay) God makes some vessels to honour, and some to dishonour, in a resurrection of life, or a resurrection of damnation (*Jo. 5. 29.*) a resurrection to everlasting life, and honour, or everlasting death, and contempt ; *Dan. 12. 2. Mar. 12. 46.* The Lord of this great house, in the exercise of his free grace, powerfully and irresistibly bestows his own creature-life of everlasting righteousness on some, which makes them vessels of honour. And, he leaves others to their own choice, in the exercise of their own free-will (whom he has ever seen incorrigible in their rebellious mind, against him, to shew his wrath upon, as vessels of dishonour;

honour. Hereby will he make his power known, after all his patient bearing with them, during the allotted season of their triall, till they have ripened and fitted themselves for their own destruction. Thus, as great master of the house, that gives being to all his creatures, will he accordingly make use of them, get praise to himself, in both his vessels of Gold and Silver, that are saved; and of wood and earth, that everlastingly perish. Those that give not glory to him, by submitting to the terms of receiving his unspeakable mercy, he will take it, in the final triumphs of his justice, over them. Those that honour him, he will put honour upon; and those that despise him, he will irresistibly pour everlasting contempt upon.

Verf. 21. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the masters use, and prepared unto every good work.

Heres the use, *Paul* makes of what he had said in the former verse. Saints must purge themselves from all those things that render men vessels of dishonour, manifesting them to be nothing but wood and earth, that is, to have or regard no other life, but what is a perishing vanity. Out of that state of life, are saints to depart, that has either filth of flesh or spirit, in it. From both these filths, are they to purge themselves, by quitting that (*2 Cor. 7. 1.*) For the Gospel-life, thats, for ever, free from all filthines. They must depart out of their own countrey, or natural state, at best, into the heavenly, new-creation-state or Land of promise, in the image of the second *Adam*. Thus did *Abraham*, in figure and truth. He departed out of the corrupt state of his nature, into the righteous life thereof, figured by literal *Canaan*. And then, was but as a sojourner there, waiting for the heavenly; *Heb. 11. 13, 16.* The fading glory and image of the earthy is to be done away, for the everlasting glory and image of the heavenly; *2 Cor. 3. 10, 11. 1 Cor. 15. 49.* All first-creation-life in man or Angel, is from the perishable nature of it, characterized by flesh, in which neither of them could ever enter into the kingdom of God. *vers. 50.* In distinction from this, new-creature, Gospel-life in Christ and his, is called spirit. That that is called flesh, wars against spirit, in the saint himself, till fully crucified; *Gal. 5. 17.* *Paul*, calls the former, at best, a body and law of sin and death, from which the law of the spirit of life, perfectly frees the saint, at last, by the full death of it. So, is the death of death, *Ro. 8. 2.* Where the Gospel-spirit of the Lord is the ruling principle of life and action in man, there is true liberty (*2 Cor. 3. 17.*) The free-will of the son of God, the glorious liberty of the adopted sons of God, whom the first born son of God, makes free indeed. This only makes vessels of honour; a life, that has immortality in it. It sanctifies and cleanses from all filth of flesh and spirit, makes them meet for the Masters use, prepared unto every good work. This sanctification by the Gospel-spirit of truth, is, through the death it brings on the spirit of nature, in the corrupt or righteous life thereof. Christ thus, by death sanctified our nature, at best, in himself, and prays that the father would sanctify it so, in his followers; *Jo. 17. 17. 19.* And,

all this is but the negative part of everlasting sanctification. The positive, is the setting up of that new life of everlasting righteousness, which will make us holy as God is holy, pure, as Christ is pure; His spirit of everlasting righteousness becoming the principle of all our life and action. This compleats our everlasting sanctification. The same hand or Gospel-spirit of Christ, that clears us from all evil, by putting ours to death, fills it with all good, in the gift of its own life. This makes men, every way fit for the Masters use, and ready to every good work. Man never is, or does any thing after Gods own heart, but in Gods own spirit and life. Without the Gospel-spirit of the son, can men do nothing, thats wel-pleasing to the father. In that spirit, and will of God, only, can they possess their vessels, for ever, in sanctification and honour; 1 Thes. 4. 3, 4.

Verf. 12. *Flee also youthfull lusts: But follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*

Paul, here, farther admonishes saints, what to flee from, and what to follow after. The negative part of his advice, is, to flee youthfull lusts. He means, not chiefly, the vile affections and lusts of the corrupt spirit of nature, which also are to be fled from; but those, found in the righteous state thereof, when a man is made wise, strong and honourable, fruitful and flourishing in the glory and exercise of a first-covenant-life, received in and from Christ himself. The youthfull lusts, incident to this state of man, are an inordinate desire after, love to, and delight in the fading riches, wisdom, righteousness, glory and fruits of that life, so as to refuse the death and loss of all, under the cross, for Christs Gospel-life and heavenly treasures thereof, the righteousness and wisdom of God, as the young man did. Vanity is written on all man is, or can do, within the compass of his own nature. And enmity to God and his spirit of grace, lies under all. So, death is at his door, on all accounts. The principle and root of all his life and action is vanity. His whole fleshly tree with the fruit, root and branch, all is vanity, says the true spiritual preacher, and King Solomon, Christ himself. So have we the ground, both of the negative and affirmative part of Pauls advice, in these few words, as to what saints should flee, or follow. An unlawfull love to the life of the law, inclines to the unlawfull use of it, against Christs Gospel-life, and so leads towards eternal death. In stead of giving it up in sacrifice to God, by his Gospel-spirit, the setting it up in a rebellious opposition to God and that spirit, was the very sin of the fallen Angels, which has turned them into devils, in unchangable enmity to God. Youthfull lusts after this life, as also self-confidence in it, will satan back and strengthen by the utmost of his policy and subtleties, and so charm men, as perfectly to deafen their ear to all Gospel-warnings and counsels; as to the vanity and insignificancy of all that, to salvation. He deafs self-confident righteous men, to Gospel, more then common sinners. *Publicans and Harlots* are lesse prejudiced against it, then they, and liker to enter the Kingdom of God. An overvaluing thought and unlawfull love, for a first-covenant life and things of man, therein, runs men into all sorts of

of mystical uncleanness and wickedness, against God and his Gospel-spirit, to whom all our love, service and worship should be paid, according to the affirmative part of *Pauls* counsel, here.

But follow righteousness, faith, love, peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

What righteousness? The everlasting righteousness of Christs Gospel-spirit. For this, is the fading, first-covenant-life of our own renewed spirit of nature, with all its perishing vanities, to be fled from; as mystical *Sodom*, it confided in and set up against Gospel light, and life. All is to be quitted as dung and losse, for Christs spiritual life, with *Paul*, which renders man everlastingly blessed in himself, and delightful to God. This, ought man most eagerly to pursue, by an encreasing faith in it, love to it, and peaceful union with Christ, and all spiritual saints, in it, that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. This pure heart, is such as hath Christs spirit of everlasting purity set up in it. In this spirit only, can man acceptably pray, or rightly worship and call on the name of the Lord. This is the only spirit, that can effectually cause man to depart from all iniquity. This only can deliver from every evil way, all the paths of the destroyer. Man is under an absolute impossibility of working righteousness acceptably, bringing forth fruits to God, or worshipping him in spirit and truth, in the life of his own spirit, at best, that is but letter, figure and shadow of the heavenly.

Verf. 23. *But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.*

What are these foolish, unlearned questions? Such, by which, man contends against Christs spiritual light and convictions, bestowed upon him, for keeping up his own nature, in the fading life and glory of the law, thats after his own heart. Such do most vainly contend against the known command of God, and example of Christ, about salvation. Is not this a most vain, sinful, self-destroying labour? The Gospel-spirit speaks nothing but Sword, Fire, War, and Death, to all they dispute for, and contend to keep alive. All questions raised by man, and disputed in favour to themselves, against the cross, are the foolish, unlearned questions, the disputers of this world do determine, to their own ruine, in flat contradiction to the only possible way and means of their being saved. They maintain the very counsel of the devil, in his mystery of iniquity, against the whole counsel of God, in his mystery of Godliness. The very thing, they question, and strive against, is the whole Gospel-doctrine, and spiritual faith of saints, therein. They most foolishly strive in a known disobedience to God himself, about the way of salvation. This turns their first-covenant life, into a lie. A deceived heart turns them aside hereunto, and they are unwilling to give their understanding fair play, in a diligent searching the scriptures, with the noble *Bereans*, to see whether things be so, as they imagine,

imagine, or no. They will not deliver their soul from satans lie, by asking, Is not this a lie, I carry in my right hand ? Will this first-covenant life, indeed, do my work, for salvation ? *Esay. 44. 20.* So, they goe on, feeding on Ashes, and Dust, the Old Serpents diet, first-creation vanities. Those that have truly learned Christ, and follow him, under the crosse, raise no such doubts, nor maintain any such unlearned questions and disputes, against it ; *Eph. 4. 20, 25.* They put away their lie, and speak his Gospel truth. This will they do, that have heard him, and been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus. They put off the old man, with all his deceitfull lusts, and false reasonings to maintain them ; and put on the new. The renewed old man, usurping all the Gospel titles of the new, thrusts him out of the Church, as a blasphemous wrangler, about the inheritance. Never more generally and prevailingly will this be the practice of the first-covenant brethren against the second, then when Christ is ready to break forth, for the finall decision of the controversy of his true *Sion* saints, against them. These foolish and unlearned questions, and disputes against the Gospel, *Paul* would have saints wholly avoid, as gendring strifes, and contentions, never to be finished, in the principles they goe upon, but by Christs final decision of all controversies against him, at his second coming, in that spirit, they fight against, all along this world, under satans reign. Men stiffly stood up for maintaining their doctrine and way, for salvation, against all Gospel-truth, when Christ himself was the preacher. When the convincing demonstrations of Gospel-wisdom in *Steven*, silenced them, they furiously ran upon him, and stoned him. What is to be done with self-contentents ? or, what said to them ? They set up for salvation, in that life, Christ has evidently crucified in himself, before their eyes. This shews them wilfully ignorant and unlearned, as to all Gospel-truth, as knowingly and obstinately disobedient thereunto. This is their black character. They refuse to submit to what they know, Christ himself submitted to in our nature ; *Gal. 3. 1.* Saints are in a quiet silence, and universal obedience to all the commands of Gods spiritual law, to follow Christs own example and practice as to the putting off the changable life of the old man and putting on the unchangable life and righteousness of the new. So will they be unchangably obedient to God, in all things, and unchangably blessed in their deeds ; *Jam. 1. 25.*

Verf. 24. *And the servant of the Lord must not strive : but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient.*

Verf. 25. *In meeknes instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.*

Verf. 26. *And that they may recover (Gr. awake) themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive (Gr. alive) by him, at his will.*

Here are the qualifications of such servants of the Lord, as are fit teachers of others. They must not strive, but be gentle to all men, patient, and in meekness of wisdom

wisdom, apt to instruct even those that oppose themselves. They are, in the peaceable spirit of Christ, to deal with the unquiet, turbulent spirit of man, striving to the utmost, for the keeping up his own will and wisdom, against Gods; abusing all his natural powers, in contending against God himself. Man sets up his own will and wisdom, in the first covenant, against the Lords, in the second. True saints are to declare Gospel-truths to such opposers, without any thing of strife, or bitterness, hear, or hear not, waiting on God, for the issue; according to that rule, *Phil. 3. 15*. The opening hearts, with *Lydias*, to receive the truth, is Christs immediate work, who made that difference in *Pauls* hearers, at *Rome*, where some beleev'd the things that were spoken, and some believed them not; *Act. 28. 24*. *Paul* may plant and *Apollo* water, but unless God give the blessing and increase, nothing is done; *1 Cor. 3. 6*. The words of *Eternal Life*, become a *Savour of Death* to the wilful haters thereof; yet the declarers of them, *A sweet savour to God*, therein; *2 Cor. 2. 15, 16*. His word prospers in the thing whereto it is sent, one way or other, as a savour of life or death, to the obedient receivers, or willful rejecters thereof; *Esey 55. 11*. 'Tis suted to carry on Gods discriminating work every way, as a two-edged Sword, in love or wrath, towards them that are saved, or them that perish. The servant of the Lord, must patiently bear the contradictions of sinners, in a constant unwearied mind in well-doing, by his own example; *Heb. 12. 3*. They must not be angry with their hearers, for not presently receiving all they say, however true in itself, or cleerly spoken; but desire them to examine their doctrine, by a right search of the scriptures; *Act. 17. 11*. So, God has the glory, if those that, at present oppose, are brought, by their means, to the acknowledging of the truth. *Paul*, once, remarkably opposed it, himself. The reason, why they should treat opposers, gently, is, because peradventure God will give them repentance to the acknowledging of it, according to his own good pleasure. Those that have the spiritual seed of Gospel-life, in them, whether they be in the corrupt or righteous nature, will at length, receive it, however, at present, in a total ignorance and unbelief of it. Gospel-teachers must rejoyce in a serviceableness to the Lords designs of mercy and grace, towards others, with all patience and long-suffering.

The Lord can give them such a repentance or chang to eternal life, as can never be repented of, or turned back again, from. A bare repentance from dead works (or works of the corrupt-spirit of nature, dead in trespasses and sins) to the righteous life of the law, with the addition of supernatural, or Gospel-light, may be repented of or turned back from, again, so as to lay men under an impossibility of any repentance or chang of mind, for ever after; *Heb. 6. 1, 6*. But, a full repentance to eternal life, sets all safe. Then do men awake out of the deep sleep of the spiritual seed in them, and recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, wherein they were taken alive by him, in the righteous life of their own restor'd nature, which was made by Satans craft, the very Snare, in which he took them captive, at his will. A full establishment of them, there, renders them compleatly, men after his own heart; as the establishing them in the life of the second covenant, would make them men after God's own heart. All men, within the compass of
their

their own nature, corrupt or righteous, are found by the spirit of God, lying in a union of mind with the spirit of the devil, in direct enmity to God, and that Gospel-spirit, in which alone they can be saved. Satan, as retaining all the excellencies of his angelical nature, turned into unchangable enmity to God, was too hard for man in innocency; and much more, since the fall. By the superiority of his angelical nature, he can rule over men, in whatever variety of condition, corrupt or reformed, as his captives; yea, as loyal subjects. For, they are in a union of mind with him, their mortal foe, in enmity to Christ, their only deliverer, friend, and saviour. As a fore addition to this their dangerous bondage, under satan, it is their will and pleasure to be his captives. They delight to wear his chains, and be caught in his snars. He can gratify man, in all, his heart can wish, in the corrupt or righteous state, thereof. Man's final deliverance can be, by nothing lesse then the death of that nature, in the life whereof, they are doing satans will and their own, in a union together. In a serviceableness to Gods design, of bringing men to submit to such death, are the teaching servants of the Lord, to endeavour the recovering them out of the snares of the devil. When man is wakened out of the snare of the devil, into the life and glorious liberty of Christ, the fleshly mind, which is satans party, will still keep footing in him, and the spirit of the devil, thereby, maintain a constant fight, against the spirit of Christ, to the last gasp; *Gal. 5. 17.* But the spirit of Christ in them, is greater then the spirit of this world, within or without them, and will be sure to overcome; *1 Jo. 4. 4.*

C H A P. III.

Verf. 1. *This know also, That in the last Days, Perillous times shall come.*

First, What are these *Last dayes* ? Secondly, What the *Perillous Times*, in them, all Saints are to look for ? This know, or take for granted, that so it will be.

To the *first* ; These *Last Days*, are the days, immediately preceding the perioding of Satans reign, over the world, and beginning of Christs. The Devils reign bears date from the moment of his first sin and fall, by which he set up for himself, in the worldly power of that life, wherein created, in a known rebellion against God and his new-creature-spirit of everlasting righteousness. This did he, in a known contrariety to Christs example (Who, as first-born of all changable first-creation beings and life, the immediate root, womb, parent, head and former of the rest) did by the sacrificing work of his originally unchangable creature-spirit, become the first-born from the dead, in unchangable union therewith. *Col.* 1. 15, 18. The Good angels follow'd this lamb, whither-soever he went, in submitting to the like mystical death on their changable first-created state of life, in order to passe with him, into the unchangable life of his creature-root and father. *Whither-soever he looked, they looked : and whither he went, they went ; Ezek.* 1. and 10. In a dutiful compliance with, and obsequiousness to him, their head, when he was lifted up out of the earthly changable life of his Angelical state, by the death and losse thereof, into his own new-creature-state of everlasting righteousness, they also were lifted up. So, after, was he lifted up, by death, out of the earthly, changable state of our nature, into the same heavenly creature-life and divine also, as a pattern to all his followers, through such death, from amongst men. Evil angels and men, quit this head, refusing to follow him, through such death of changable nature, in the first, into the unchangable life of his heavenly creature-spirit, by a second creation, willfully and presumptuously setting up themselves in the first, in unchangable enmity to the second, and so, to, Gods infinite divinity, also. The spirit, or seed of spiritual life, was in the Angelical wheels, that followed him ; and so, in men, also ; *Ezek.* 1. 20. The same mind was in them, as in their head ; and so, in men (*1 Pet.* 4. 1.) to suffer in the flesh, or changable, first-creation state of both. Neither of the rebellious refusers of this change, by death, keep their first estate or habitation, *Jude, vers.* 6. What was that ? A state of spotless first-covenant-life, and temporary subjection and obedience to the second, shew'd and offer'd them, with the terms, on which possible to be received, in and by

its own spiritual light. From this changable state of subjection to it, do evil angels and men, apostatize into a state of unchangable enmity against it; and will accordingly be dealt with. Man's establishing himself in the first-covenant, against the second, is of the same dangerous complexion with the sin of Devils; the unpardonable sin against the holy Ghost, or Gospel-spirit. When Satan tempted *Eve* to eat of the forbidden tree, or to gratify, feed, keep up, and establish her self in the first-covenant life, against the second, he told her, that thereby, *They should be as Gods, knowing good and evil; Gen. 3. 5.* This was the highest falshood and blasphemy, imaginable; making it a being like God, to know evil by the doing of it. In this presumptuous God-like sovereignty and uncontrolled exercise of his own will, has Satan been permitted to exercise all the evil that is in his heart, over all the inhabitants of the Earth, or Men, in the corrupt and righteous spirit of nature, as the two branches of his Kingdom. But, in conclusion, all power will be taken from him, and his whole party of evil angels and men. And when this fatal blow draws near, must Saints look for a most perillous season. For, then will this *Dragon* come forth in highest rage, with his utmost depths of subtilty, and methods of delusion, to oppose Christ and his kingdom. He will cause all sorts of iniquity, literal and mystical, to abound amongst men, beyond whatever was before, to the destroying all foundations of Justice, in any kind, all bonds or ties of Nature, putting men upon acting against the common light of Reason, and rules of heathen Morality. He will set open the Flood-gates to all sorts of Iniquity, to overwhelm and drown men therein, and fill the whole Earth with Violence and Rapine. And then will he also prompt and instigate another sort of men, to a yet more dangerous sort of evils, hidden works of darkness, under the guise and cover of spiritual truth and righteousness. This use will he make of the first-covenant professour, his choycer and more useful sort of subjects, for opposing the Kingdom of Christ. Then will he, in and by this part of his subjects, speak lies in hypocrisy, or in so near a resemblance to Gospel-truths, as to cause a great apostacy from such Gospel-faith in the spiritual life of Christ, as Gospel-light amounts unto. when this time draws near, for the Man Christ setting open his New-creation Temple, and bringing forth his divine and New-creation Glories, into a general visibility to all, friends & foes, in love or wrath, the devil will first come forth in a most skilful imitation of that new-creature Temple of God, and assert himself, therein to be God, requiring to be worshipped, as so. This, Christ himself has foretold. Devils will come in the appearance of Christs new-name, as false Christs, and transform their false apostles among men, into the likeness of Christs true, to carry on their work, and if possible, *deceive the very elect; Mat. 24. 24.* Nothing of defence, in this case, will be left to Saints, but a steady faith in, and waiting for Christs coming forth in his almighty divine and mighty new-creature power and glories, which will discover and throw off all vizards and disguises, in which false Christs and false Apostles have acted their parts. *For as the lightning shineth out of the East to the West, shall the coming of the Son of man be.* As the literal Sun by rising and shining in its own self-evidencing light, silences all doubts and disputes about it, through its own undeniable brightness

ness and testimony ; so will the spiritual sun of everlasting righteousness ; *Mal. 4. 2.* This will shine seven fold brighter then the mystical as well as literal first-creations sun ; all the light and wisdom of the first-covenant spirit, in which devils and men, in a combination of self-interest, are imitating it, in unchangeable enmity to it. This will discover all, and consume the wicked one, with all his crew of false Christs and Apostles ; *2 Thes. 2. 8.* But, immediately before this final decision, will the greatest fallhoods, and highest blasphemies be confidently vented and received, for the very spiritual, Gospel-truths of Christ. And hereby, will many be turned from the very truth of Christ, to the very lie of the devil. In this practice, would they finally deceive, if possible, *the very Elect.* All other professors they sweep, clear, before them. And thereby, will they render it a most troublesome, perilous season, to those that will not be so served. *Great tribulation will there be, on all hands, such as was not from the beginning, nor ever shall be more ; Mat. 24. 21.* But, when the devil is in his highest rage, opposing Christs kingdom, will Christ, at his coming forth, strike down his ; lay all his kingdoms of this world and glory of them, (which he once tempted him by the offer of) in the dust. These practices of devils and men, immediately before this, would *Paul* have saints, know, look, and provide for.

Verf. 2. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy ;

In this and the three following Verses, have we an account of the sad fruits of these perillous times, the utmost evils, most exorbitant lusts, and unbridled motions of the corrupt spirit of nature, causing wonderful disturbance, through the abounding thereof ; and filling the earth with violence, madness and folly. This, by breaking all bonds and laws, through the unlimited practice of all manner of grosse iniquity, in the most insolent, daring and presumptuous manner, admitting no check or controll, but avowedly glorying in their shame. This will be one ingredient in to these perillous times. But the chief cause of them, will be the mysticall iniquity, that will be the fruit of mens being lovers of themselves. The self, which the love of, will be the foundation and root of the greatest evils in the last times, is mans nature, as made fruitful in the exercise of a righteous first-covenant life ; in preference, and so, enmity to Christs spiritual life of everlasting righteousness. This renders them covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, &c. Covetousness signifies the inordinate affection and evil concupiscence after that life, that renders their own nature rich, wise, strong, honourable, and righteous, wherein they boast and pride themselves, in a despisful hatred to Christs spiritual life of everlasting righteousness, wherein alone they can be saved. The losse of all they glory in, is the undispensable way and means of receiving that life, in which God has all the glory ; and they, salvation. All such self-lovers, contradict, blaspheme or speak evil of that spiritual life of Christ, which can be received on no other terms, then the total death and losse of all, they pride and exalt themselves, in. When covetous, proud boasters,

in their own inlightned nature, they blaspheme Christs Gospel-life, though by them known, to be transcendently more excellent then that they stand possessed of. They do, against their Gospel-conviction, utterly deny there is any such thing, at all. So, make a meer nothing of all Gospel-life, and words thereof. The whole way, life, and words of Christs Gospel, are every where called heresy by them, whereas all their pretended Gospel-doctrine is a meer lump of heresies and blasphemies. These self-confident first-covenant blasphemers of all the doctrine of the second, carry it ~~clear~~, against Christ and his spiritual saints, till his second coming. And, he ~~ein~~, are they disobedient to parents, *unthank-full, unholy*. By parents, in a mysticall sense, is meant Christ himself, the Father of spirits and great Womb, or Mother of all living, whence all Angels and men received their immortal spirits, and natural life; and some, a spiritual, from that new-creature spirit in him, that is the *Jerusalem*, above, the Mother of all spiritual saints, and Angels. The due obedience to Christ, all men owe, is to follow his example and obey his command; in parting with all the life and glory of their own nature, for his more excellent Gospel-life and Glory, never to be done away. He that does not thus follow, obey, and honour the son, as he honoured the father (by the obedient surrender of the life of our nature, at best, in himself) *honours not the Father that sent him* (Jo. 5. 23.) But highly dishonours both, to his own certain ruine. First-covenant saints, wilfully setting up their holy flesh, in a murderous mind of unchangable enmity to Gods holy spirit, in himself, and true saints, turn themselves into a synagoge of satan, mysticall *Sodom, Egypt, and Babylon*, out of which Christ calls his chosen ones, as also out of the literal. Thus do a first-covenant people of God (wilfully refusing so great salvation as is Christs new-covenant life, convincingly shewed and offered them, by Gospel-light) write out their minds, in all the sad and black characters, here expressed, as lovers of themselves, in the first-covenant, rather then God, in the second. So, of a changable people of God in the first, become they a fixed people of the devil, in unchangable enmity to God and the second. The utter denying his more excellent creature-life, after convincingly shewed them is wilfull blasphemy. Their keeping what they have, in a known contrariety to his own example and command, is wilfull disobedience to parents, in the sense, above-expressed; such rebellion, as is like the sin of witch-craft, Through such covetousness and lusting after the fading life and glory of their own nature, as is idolatry. When Christ by spirituall light, has shewed himself to men, in his divine and creature-composition, to love or prefer any thing before him, is unpardonable wickedness. To worship God by any other image of him, then that highest creature-likenes of the divinity, in Christs person, when made known to us, is wilfull idolatry and rebellion. And this argues men unthankful and most unworthy towards him, that has given them their being, and restored them to themselves again, after lost and dead. Their wilfull refusal to part with all their own, in the first-creation, for his own, in the second, is the highest ingratitude and folly, imaginable. And so come they to be most unholy, also, worse by all manner of spiritual wickedness, then common sinners, by literal and gross uncleannesses. Their holy flesh
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by enmity to Christs holy spirit, is more abominable to God, then the very corrupt spirit of nature and all its abominations. Their preferring, with *Esau*, the forbidden first-creation-morsel, all sorts of worldly vanities, offered by satan, before the new creation birth-right, offered them by Christ, is counted by God, the highest profanes; *Heb. 12. 16.* And hence also, may they be truly said to be

Verf. 3. *Without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, and despisers of those that are good;*

That is, truly good, in Gods sight. Natural affection is the greatest bond and tie in nature, for loving one another, from an oneness of blood and life, therein. And this is a fit type and figure of the yet stronger tie in grace, and union of love to Christ, in his everlasting creature-life, when shewed and offered men. Want of love to him then, herein, is fitly charactred by want of natural affection. For they are under the highest obligation, imaginable, to pay all love, service and obedience to him, therein, by what he has suffered and done, for the bringing them, into it. But then, as a yet worse thing, they are found without any love to him, by being truce-breakers, false accusers, and incontinent. Every of these words signify the greatest unworthines men can be guilty of, in a literal sence, towards men. But, much deeper is mans guilt, in the spiritual sence thereof, towards God. Such, truce-breaking implies they were, once, in covenant with God; not only in the first, by his fresh gift to them of the righteous life thereof, but as convincingly shewed, and offered to be taken into and possessed of the life of the second. By refusing Gods declared terms, way and means of partaking thereof, are they truce-breakers. The end of Gods giving the former life, was by their lawful use thereof, in sacrifice, to receive the latter. The end of the Law is Christ. The end of his giving or restoring the life of the Law, in man's nature, is, that by the obedient use thereof, they may come to him for his Gospel-life of everlasting righteousness. Christ, when he had taken the life of the Law, did exactly observe the terms of translating our nature in himself, into his Gospel-life. And when the like obedience is performed by his followers, all Gods designed ends in both Covenants, are answered by them. On the contrary, all is frustrated by truce-breaking; which is the breach of all obligations, man lies under, on all accounts, for obedience to God, and so, for his own true blessedness. If in stead of yielding up the life of the Law, for that of the Gospel, they set up themselves, therein, against the Gospel, they exclude Christ himself, in his Gospel-life, shut up the kingdom of heaven against themselves, refuse so great salvation, offered them, and chuse eternal death. They break all ties and obligations they are under, for yielding to the declared and known terms, of being saved. By owning Christ for a season, in his Gospel-life and truths, by Gospel-light, which is called, *A beginning in the Spirit*, they have been actually engaged, to observe the spiritual Law and Command of God, for the receiving that life, by surrender of their own. The breaking with, and starting aside from God, in this case, with resolution to keep up the life of the Law, and their holy flesh or nature therein, in a fixed enmity to his Gospel-spirit, lodges them in the same most

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profane and unholy state, devils are in, think man as well as he will, of it. They break his twofold-covenant with them, by the most wicked use of the former, in rebellion against him and the latter. They do hereby demonstrate, they have received the grace of God, or knowledge of his Gospel-truths, in vain, to worse than no purpose, by unpardonable sinning against all. Christ will have no more to do with them, but in wrath and fiery indignation, and when matters are come to this sad pass, with them, do they become false accusers. They do in utmost malice, think, speak and practice against God, Christ, spiritual saints and all Gospel truths. They accuse, blaspheme and decry all right Gospel-words as the most dangerous errors, and blasphemies, in the world. And this do they, through a mystical incontinency, by running into all spiritual uncleans, to gratify their idolatrous coveting or lusting after the first-covenant-life, and fading riches and Glory of their own nature, therein. All this is direct whordom against Christ, in his Gospel-life, and unfaithfulness to that marriage-bed, he offered to take them into, with himself, therein. And this spirit of whordom, they are entred into, with the devil, against Christ, renders them fierce despisers of those that are good, true spiritual saints, and all that is good in Gods sight; that is, unchangably good; and so, of all Gospel-truth. They perfectly hate the Gospel-life of Christ, in himself and saints, and all the words thereof. This is the highest wickedness, they can be guilty of. And still, one sin draws on and engages them in another, as linked together, in the same chain. Those that are so fierce, furious, and outrageously mad, against that spirit (in which alone they know, they, or any can be saved) and all that have, own, and declare the words thereof, what will they stick at? They are here, farther described to be.

Verf. 4. Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more then lovers of God.

Here's a further character of the desperately wicked mind of such apostates. The word, traitours, signifies their irreconcilable malice to Christ's very Person, the true spiritual Lord and King. The ground of their treason and rebellion against him, is an unchangable murderous mind of enmity to him, in both his divine and new-creature life; acquired, by their entring into a firm contract and combination with the devil, against him. They chuse rather to be established in the first-covenant life of their own nature, gratified with satan's perishing-meats, then in the grace of the second, by Christ's never-perishing meats. And, hence, in the progressive character of them, do they become heady, and high-minded, by their own enlightened wisdom in the first, managing a proud, head-strong opposition to the grace of God in the second, and all the words thereof, that speak death to all they have set up in, for eternal life. They make their wisdom judge in the case, against all the words of Gods. They unalterably resolve the fulfilling their own will, in a known contrariety to his, in every point. Gods wisdom, words, and will are laid cleer aside and utterly denied. They walk after their own hearts, in every thing. So, not
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after his, in any thing. They love their own will and pleasure, in direct enmity to Gods and all thars pleasing to him. They love the riches, life, righteousness and glory of their own nature : minde not God, or his glory, riches, and righteousness, save to oppose, contradict, decry, and blaspheme all. They resolve to do good to themselves, as they reckon, and men will praise them for it, but all the while, are they abominable to God, and shall never see or enjoy the light and glory of his kingdom ; *Psal.* 49. 18, 19. In all their fading honour, they are but as the *Beasts* that perish, possessed of nothing but a perishing life.

Verf. 5. Having a from of Godliness, but denying the power thereof. Form such turn away.

Here is the summ of all, said in the former verses, as to the black and dismal character of the persons, meant; such, as in the form of Godliness deny the power thereof. Form of Godliness, here, signifies not a bare, outward hypocritical profession of Godliness, but a real inward principle of it ; the renewed principle of first-covenant holiness. This is but the shadow or image, of the true holiness, or heavenly creature-image of Gods divine holines, in Christs person, called the righteousness of God. Holy flesh, form of Godliness, first-covenant holiness, righteousness of man, though realities, are but fading shadows of the eternall, substantial things and truths of the second, in the heavenly creature-image of God. The law was given by *Moses*, and the life of it was given to man, in the first creation : but, grace and truth, came by *Jesus Christ*, and are set up in man, by a new creation. The former is to be taken down, in order to our receiving the latter, which was first set up in *Christ* (*Pro.* 8. 22, 23.) But last, in man. The former is called form of Godliness, oldness of letter, the second, power of Godliness and newness of spirit. This latter is only found in Christs Gospel-spirit of everlasting righteousness, and partakers thereof. The first-creation was sown in corruption, not an actual corrupted thing, but corruptible, in all the life and goodness thereof, in Angel or man. Such corruption, cannot inherit incorruption. Nor Angel nor man, in that perishable fleshly life, can enter the kingdom of God ; But only as born again of the incorruptible seed of new-creature life. *1 Pet.* 1. 23. This is the only creature-life that endures for ever, in head and members ; the power of Godliness. All first covenant-life, is but the form. Whoever then takes up therein, for salvation, denies the power, the Gospel-spirit of *Christ*, in which alone is to be found the true saints Everlasting Rest. All that expect salvation in the form, will be unutterably disapointed, and found the greatest enemies of the power, which alone gives entrance into the kingdom. The Gospel-spirit is the most mighty, irresistible, powerful thing, next to the almighty and infinite divinity. No first-creation-power can bear up against it, or stand before it. In love or wrath, it will lay all thar, flat before it, in all Angels and men ; subduing all things to it selfe ; *Phil.* 3. 21. Secondly, then, how come they that are possessed of the form of Godliness, to deny the power thereof ? By an unlawful love so, overvalue of, and false confidence in the former, so as utterly to deny the latter,

latter, the Gospel-spirit of everlasting life. This, the disciples at *Ephesus*, for a season, and *Paul* himself, once knew not of; *Acts*. 19. 2. On the first glad, Gospel-tydings of it, both he and they received it, and turned from their own understanding, conferred not with, or admitted their own wisdom, in the former, judgment in the case. But, in a perfect contrariety to this demeanour, others, when clearly convinced of it, by Gospel-light, wilfully reject the whole counsel of God, therein. The Apostles said, *Master, these are hard sayings, who can bear them?* But the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* that were before them in light, and discerning, saw the truth of Christ's Gospel-assertions, and blasphemed them. So, were unpardonable blasphemers of the Holy Ghost, or Gospel-spirit of truth; *Jo*. 9. 41. They did, knowingly, set up themselves in the form of Godlines, or life of the Law, against the power of it, in the spirit of the Gospel. They denied any righteous creature-life, attainable by man, but what they were possessed of. They clothe that with all the titles or words of scripture, belonging to the second, and so will needs passe for the only Saints. And then will they allow the true Gospel-Saints, no other titles, but apostats, blasphemers, and the like. So are they hypocrites, in the reality of first-covenant life and righteousness of man, as personating what they are not, reckoning themselves true heirs of the kingdom of God. This self-confident first-covenant generation will not passe away, till all be fulfilled, as to the sufferings of Christ, in his whole mystical body of spiritual saints. Nothing but the actual sound of the seventh trumpet, and acclamations of spiritual saints, at the coming forth of their glorious King, will decide this controversy of *Sion*, against these self-confident enemies of God and them. Then, all the righteous blood from *Abel*, downwards, will be reckoned for, on this *Cainish* generation, from first to last; *Mat*. 23. 35. They set up Christ himself in the flesh, or righteous life of the law, and themselves in a conformity to him, there, in direct opposition to himself and true saints, in his Gospel-spirit of everlasting life. They set up the law, given by *Moses*, in opposition to the grace and truth that comes by Jesus Christ. Their setting up, in the first covenant life of the law, against the second covenant life of the Gospel, amounts to all this. This done, under, and so, against Gospel-light, is the most criminal denial of the power of Godlines, here meant. From such, *Paul* advises all true saints, with *Timothy*, to turn away, as mystical *Sodom*, worse then literal. Christ himself found these wolves in the clothing and titles of the true sheep, the worst of all enemies, and warns his followers to beware of them; *Mat*. 10. 16, 17. These would needs crucify Christ, when the heathen party would have let him go. Their form of Godliness is the most useful, creditable engine, for opposing and decrying the power thereof. Such carnal-Gospellers, are the most signal obstruction to Gospel, in the whole world. And, accordingly, are to be turned from, by spiritual saints.

Verf. 6. For of this sort are they which creep into Houses, and lead captive silly Women, laden with sins, led away with divers lusts.

Here is a farther account of these most criminal enemies of the Gospel. They compass Sea and Land, to Profelyte others into the same Leavened frame of spirit against it, with themselves, *Mar. 23. 15.* In the form of Godliness, or first-covenant life of the law, they set up themselves against the power of it, and everlasting life of the Gospel. This is the case of these mischievous instruments, in themselves. The persons they practice upon and prevail with, are silly Women, fitted to be deceived by their destructive doctrine. Who are these? The natural spirit, at best, from the weakeness and instability thereof, is charactered in scripture, by the *Woman*: the al-powerful Gospel spirit of the second *Adam*, by the *Man*; from its superiour strength, and excellency. All that seek for, and expect salvation, in the *Womanish* principle, where it is never to be found, are the silly mystical Women, here meant. They are, at best, therein, when they reckon all clear and well, laden with sins, and thereby exposed to be led away with divers lusts. In all their first-covenant life and righteousness, there is a filth of spirit, or enmity to God and the second, in which alone they can be saved. This sore disease of enmity to God, is the root of all spiritual uncleanness, in and under the most cleansed, righteous state of man, in the form of Godliness. They are under an impossibility of pleasing God there, because in a spirit of enmity to him. These silly Women, even all mankind, in their naturals, at best, seek help, in that which can never give it. They chuse their own spirit of bondage, before the second *Adams* spirit of true freedom. This done, after Christ has convincingly discovered to them that spirit and life they chuse, to be but a fading flower, and offered his spirit of everlasting life and liberty to them, is the greatest folly, imaginable. For, while they reckon all safe, as cleansed from the common pollutions of the world, in the corrupt spirit of nature, they are guilty of a higher rank of mysticall uncleanneses and spiritual wickednesses, called by the very same names, with the literal; Adultery, Fornication, Idolatry, Murder, &c. That very life of the law, in which man is alwayes thus sinning against the Gospel, and God himself, is his sore mystical bondage, and strong captivity. And the lesse perceived, beleeved, considered or suspected, the more dangerous. Thus laden with mystical sins, when cleansed from literal, these evil artists, devils and men come to them, in the form of Godliness, and mystery of iniquity, and finding them, as laden with sins, easy to be led away with divers lusts, do strengthen and fasten the chains of their captivity upon them, for ever, with themselves. These silly women are only for the smooth words of false Prophets; endure not the searching words of the true; *Es. 30. 10.* Right words of counsell for salvation, are reckoned hard sayings, and rejected. They speak death, to all they rest in, for eternal life. When men dote upon their beautified, adorned nature, in the first-covenant, satan and his instruments, appear their only friends, that gratify and sooth them up there, for salvation: Christ, and his true seers, the forest of all enemies

that pull down and destroy all that their hearts are set upon, for salvation. But their friendly death-wounds, will be found better then all the others flattering kisses, in conclusion. Christ requires men to hate their own life, at best, that Satan can gratify and please; Else can they not be his disciples. Satan and his instruments creep into the mystical House, even the very hearts and spirits of these silly Women, that please themselves and love to be pleased and soothed up in the first-covenant principles of nature. So they fall short of the grace and glory of God. They take up their rest in a state, wholly exclusive thereunto. Their creeping into these houses, imports their coming in the most hidden, subtle manner, imaginable, with good words and fair speeches, to deceive these simple Women, by gratifying their belly or natural desires, in direct enmity to the Cross of Christ; *Re. 16. 18.* They flatter and establish them in those first-covenant principles, for salvation, which compleats their grand captivity, in unchangable enmity to God; and death, to themselves. They are wholly deafed to all the Gospel-words of Gods wisdom. The nearer resemblance to true Godliness, and the words thereof, these formalists come forth in, the more hiddenly, and subtly do they oppose the same, and captivate their hearers. By satans and mans doctrines or perishing means, is the false confidence of their hearers, strengthened, in a perishing life; whereas they should be established with grace, and the never perishing means or words of that life. Where divers and strange doctrines, that are not true bread, carry it, Death is at the door; *Heb. 13. 9.* The wants of mans immortal spirit can never be answered by any thing that is perishable. Whoever drinks of the first-creation waters of a changable life, will thirst again. But, he that drinks of the second, shall never thirst more, that is, after the first; but, more and more pant after God and the second, till completely satisfied, in a fulness of joy. This second water, becomes a well, springing into everlasting life, in the drinker or receiver thereof, *Jo. 4. 13, 14. Psal. 42. 1, 2.* The silly Women, here, refuse Christs living waters, for the fading waters of a perishing life, in their own nature, and way, which will never answer their wants. And being thus led away by their divers foolish lusts, the sad condition they are condemned to, follows.

Vers. 7. Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledg of the truth.

What truth? The truth in Jesus; his spiritual, everlasting creature-life, opened, and brought to light, by the Gospel, and convincingly declared, and offered to be communicated to, and let up in men. Man, in that utmost wisdom of his silly, Womanish, natural spirit, is under an impossibility of ever finding this life. By this, when found by true saints, they arrive also, at the knowledg of Gods divine truth; the deep things of his infinite divinity. God can never be seen by Angels or men, in his single divine essence. But he hath contrived this way, by a spirit, distinct from his divine being, in personal union with it, to give them the knowledg of all things, divine, spiritual, and natural. He told *Moses*, his purely divine face
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and Glory could not be seen, but in and through this creature-spirit, in personal union with the divine form of God, that is in personal union with the very divine Essence, or Father. Those that refuse to partake of his infallible creature-spirit of truth, can never be seers of his divine spirit, nor ever worship God, in spirit and truth. Man then, resting in his own womanish spirit, and wisdom, and refusing Christs manly spirit, must needs be in a confounded maze, and sad labyrinth, ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledg of divine or spiritual truth; seek and learn, while he will. He will not meet God, in the way of his mercy, for true knowledg and salvation. So, God meets him in the way of his just judgment, and, for ever, excludes him, from both. This, concluded on all hands, by mans sinful chusing, and Gods judicial chusing to give him up to his own self-chosen delusion, does shut him up in an everlasting prison of darkness and death, as to all divine and spiritual life or light. This great misery does man bring upon his own head, which renders all his motion and utmost labours for rest, and true blessedness, vain and unprofitable. Gods wisdom has contrived and declared another way for it. But man will needs make his own wisdom, the carver and contriver thereof, and so is sure to miss his mark. Under this most sad condemnation do the persons lie, character'd, by silly women, in the form of Godliness, denying the power thereof.

Verf. 8. Now as *Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses*, so do these also resist the truth, men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

Here is a farther account of these persons. They wilfully resist the truth, after convincingly shewed them. Thus *Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses* his true miracles, wrought in the spirit of truth, by their false, in the spirit of lies. These are a meet figure of the wilfully rebellious mind in first-covenant resisters of the second. *Moses*, mighty in word and deed, was a type of Christ, in his all-powerful Gospel-spirit. As thus, was he beheld by *Jannes and Jambres*, two principal *Magicians*, that withstood him, as long as they could, by a counterfeit imitation of some of his miracles. This did they, in enmity to the true power and spirit, *Moses* came forth, in. By these obitinate persons, does the spirit of Christ in *Paul*, character the evil mind in these silly women and their teachers, in a first-covenant state, against the spirit of the second, in our true spiritual Lord *Moses*, and his saints. As they withstood *Moses*, so these resist the spiritual power, Gospel-life, and truths of Christ, when manifested to them. And this evidences them to be men of corrupt minds; not in the corrupt spirit of nature, destitute of any knowledg of God in first or second-covenant, but such a corrupted mind from and against Christ, as demonstrates their wilfull folly, after his twofold gift of first-covenant life, and second-covenant light, to them. Their mind, thus corrupted into an enmity to Christs spiritual life, the highest good, man is capable of possessing, renders them the worst of men.

Reprobate concerning the Faith. This implies, they once had such a knowledge of, and faith in Christ's spiritual life (that is the revealer of Gods Divine Light and truth) as Gospel-light amounts unto. After all this, they come to have a reprobate mind, void of all spiritual light, judgment, or discerning of God and Christ, as wilfully turned from, by them, and justly taken from them, as to any good or comfort to them in it, for ever after. They received the knowledge of the truth, but not in the love thereof, that they might be saved. They took pleasure in a most unrighteous opposition to it; So God gives them up to strong delusion, for beleiving satans lie, that they may be damn'd; *2 Thes.* 10. 12. They set up, with satan, in the righteous life of the law, in their own nature, against the everlasting righteousness of God, in the spirit of the Gospel. This sets them past all recovery; *Heb.* 6. 4, 6. and 10. 26. 29. Thus become they fools, as to their most concerning interest, for ever; *Ro.* 21. 22. 28. Creature-nature, and even the man Christ, as in the Mediators person, possessed of divine and everlasting creature-life, is the proper object of all spiritual faith and worship. We need not fear any mistake in terminating our worship of God, in a meer creature, when we worship the divine nature, only in, with and by such creature-nature as is in personal union with it, and so also called God; *Jo.* 1. 1. There is no danger in paying worship, and giving honour to the Son, as to the Father. The Father himself commands it; *Jo.* 5. 22, 23. For they are one; *Jo.* 17. 22. and 10. 30. To all that fix in the first covenant life and wisdom of man, satan, by transforming himself into the likeness of the new-creature-spirit, the immediate Temple of God, will, most certainly, therein, passe with them for God, and be worshipped by them; *2 Thes.* 2. 4. God alwayes saw, who would thus chuse their own ruin, but suffers them to declare their mind against him, by overt acts of treason and rebellion, to the utmost, that they as well as himself, may see the righteousness of his final vengeance upon them. After all his patience, and offers of grace, he swears, at length, in his wrath, they shall never enter into his rest.

Verf. 9. But they shall proceed no further; for their folly shall be manifest unto all, as theirs also was.

These words relate to the reprobate or undiscerning mind, as to the faith of God's elect. In this reprobate mind and perfect opposition to all Gospel truth, will this serpentine seed, in union with their Father, transform themselves into the likeness of Christ's spiritual sheep; yea, apostles, teachers, and leaders; *2 Cor.* 11. 13, 15. They'll needs be the only ministers of Christ's Gospel. All first covenant life, and second covenant light, in these cleansed, garnished, mystical houses, or men, is no sure fence against satan's casting his serpentine seed of unchangable enmity, into them. Spiritual life secures, but if empty of this, he can re-enter them, and take a seven-fold more dangerous possession of them, then he had, in their corrupt spirit of nature. He fixes them, now, for ever, against God. After Christ has a-fresh cast in his changable good first covenant seed, men grow secure, and

and sleep, or rest there. So, satan unperceivedly casts in his tares, or seed of unchangable enmity, and away he goes; *Mat. 13. 24, 25.*

But they shall proceed no further.

Though the malice of devils and their viperous brood amongst men, against God, Christ, and true saints, be unchangable, and they, therein, absolutely incorrigible, they are bounded, as to the exerting the rage of their serpentine minds, by a power, transcendently above them. God sayes to these mystical proud waves, *Hitherto shall ye go, and no farther.* He will make all, he permits these wicked (which are his sword, and rod on his righteous seed) to do, exactly serviceable to his designs, in carying on the salvation of those, they design to destroy. They shall proceed no farther, in withstanding his Gospel-truths and saints, then barely for the serving his most wise and holy ends. And their folly shall be manifested to all angels and men, good and bad, as that of *Jannes and Jambres*, in resisting the all-powerful spirit of Christ, in *Moses*. At Christs second comming, therein, all will be discovered. Satan and his apostles will be hard put to it, under the preparatory dispensation to his second comming, by the holy Angels declaring his everlasting Gospel life, for the effectual wakning up the Elect, in all nations, and so gathering them up into a union with Christ and one another, in that spirit, he is ready to come forth in; *Mat. 24. 14. 31.* In this season, will they be put to their shifts, in the highest counterfeit imitations of Christs new-creation life and power, which, through their lying wonders, or false miracles, they will presumptuously assume to themselves, and so, to their utmost, withstand all the true witness of Christs spiritual kingdom, and of his near approach therein, given by spiritual Angels or saints. But still, to saints comfort, they shall proceed no further, then the limits by God set to them, against him, or his Gospel spirit and saints. He will make all they do, tend to the magnifying that finger or power of his, that will make it self seen, to be infinitely above them. Then shall the unparallel'd folly of devils and men, in all their attempts against him, be exposed to the general view of all. Then shall unchangable wrath be upon these unchangable enemies of God. This will strip them of all power of expressing their enmity, for ever after, to the signal aggravation of their torment. All their skil and power, by which they have managed their busines against God, in this world, will be taken from them, and nothing left them to expresse their enmity, beyond gnashing of teeth.

Verf. 10. But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith; long-suffering, charity, patience.

Paul here gives a happy account of himself, as to his doctrine and life, as having therein manifested his purpose, faith, &c. He also gives a happy account of *Timothy*, as a diligent follower of him, therein; So the margin renders it. And he encourages him, to continue so doing. His doctrine, is the doctrine of all divine and
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creature-truth, summ'd up, in Christs wonderfull person, the matter of all true knowledg. His creature-spirit of truth is the means by which all divine truth is made known to Angel or man. And they must partake of his creature-spirit of truth, else can they not receive the revelation of divine or spiritual truth. The highest light and wisdom of mans nature, capacitates not to receive either. Christ, in his eldest creature-spirit (which is ever new, from everlasting to eternity) the ancient of dayes, *Daniel* foresaw the son of man approach so neer to, as to be personally united therewith, and so, with his infinite divinity, also. And in this glorious union, is the man Christ to reign over all; *Lan.* 7. 13, 14. The full doctrine of the man Christ, as to his sufferings and exaltation, and so of the compleat person of the Mediatour, and openings of all the counsell of God, and unsearchable riches of his person, all this was the substance of *Pauls* doctrine, known and followed by *Timothy*. Yea, says he to him, thou hast not on'y fully known and owned my doctrin, but manner of life, also, &c. This is no vain-glorying of *Paul* in himself, but a true glorying in the Lord and power of his spirit of grace, in which he had given himself up, in an absolute, universal obedience to the doctrine of Christ, he preached. Ths he calls *Timothy*, to witness, and so his fixed purpose of heart, as to his faith in, and love to Christ, whence made long-suffering, full of charity and patience. These words speak his full obedience to the cross of Christ, in outward and inward man. He was willing to suffer the loss of all fading vanities without or within him, for the heavenly treasures of Christ; *Phil.* 3. 7, 8. As a good souldier of Christ, was he thus prepared for all the hardships, that by injurious violence could be brought on his outward man, from enemies of the doctrine and cross of Christ. He was furnished with long-suffering and patience, to bear quietly the utmost shocks of their persecuting malice.

Verf. 11. *Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra, what persecution I endured: But out of them all the Lord delivered me.*

All these persecutions were singly for preaching the gospel. For the new name, gospel-life and truth of Christ, he counted the fading first-covenant-life of his spirit, and outward life of his bod (which is much inferior to that mortall life of his spirit) dung and loss; the keeping of them loss; the losing of them, on this right account, the greatest gain. The Lord delivered him out of all the sufferings of both, and made him more then a conquerour, in his spiritual life and power. This extinguish'd in him, all fear of death, in any kind. When the spirit of man is run down by the cross, as to all its life and motion on, at the last gasp, ready to expire, the body will be easily parted with. And then is the saint compleatly delivered from all enemies, visible and invisible. When all mortal life of spirit and body is gone, there remains nothing about us, that any enemies can touch. Those that refuse to go thorow the suffering part of duty, will throw up their Gospel-caske, after all engagements that way, for a season, in Gospel-light. Then are they gained by the enemy, to gratify

fy and do his will, in enmity to Christ. Saints conquer by suffering the death of what can be conquered, that they may be possessed only of a life, in which, sure to conquer. In the spirit of Christ, are they enabled to suffer all things, and privileged thereby, to conquer all enemies. God delivers saints not from sufferings, at present; but by them, for ever, as the appointed way of their deliverance. The spirit of Christ, in all times, and most, in the last and worst of times, renders saints, men of contention with the whole Earth, because they torment all that dwell upon Earth, or rest in but earthly, natural principles, corrupt or righteous. All sufferings of saints, with Christ, as to what is but earthly and mortal, renders them more firm and strong in spiritual life and union with Christ; So far are they from separating them from the love of God. By resisting and striving against the enemies of Christ, even to blood or death, rather than comply with their rebellious minds, do they most signally testify against them, that the utmost tribulations are more desirable, then to quit the life and testimony of Christ. In all such sufferings, as men bring upon them, in enmity to the will God, are saints doing the will of God. Who has the best on't? By suffering, they overcome the will of their adversaries, and do the will of God. The will of man, corrupt or righteous, is in union with the devil. The death of that, in order to live in the will of God, or Gospel-spirit of Christ, separates us, for ever, from the devil, and unites us, for ever, with God. Suffering then, to the utmost, in what can suffer, is the only way to our final deliverance.

Verf. 12. Yea, and all that will live Godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.

All true Gospel-saints must suffer persecution. True Godliness, in Christ's Gospel-spirit of everlasting righteousness, inevitably exposes to persecution. Christ himself, on this account, endured the utmost of reproach, contradiction and persecution, from men. In pure obedience to God, performable only in the spirit of true Godliness, must both the inner and outer man of saints, be exposed to all sorts of afflictions and tribulations, according to the will of God, as their eternal sanctification, from all filth of flesh and spirit. Without such a spiritual circumcision, as cuts off flesh and blood, the life of nature, at best, which lets and hinders our entrance into the Kingdom of God (1 Cor. 15. 50.) It is impossible to be saved. This is tormenting doctrine to all that dwell on the earth, or have set up that earthly life of holy flesh, as what they wholly rest in, and build on, for salvation. Pauls marks of conformity to Christs death, in his holy flesh, manifested his living Godly, in Christs holy spirit. When saints hate the life of their own nature, at best, as they ought, what an easy yoke and light burden must the Cross of Christ, on all accounts, upon their inner, or outer man, needs be? All is but with design to seize and take from them, what is hateful and burdensome, to him and them, in order to put his desirable yoke and delightful burden, upon them. A perfect captivity or subjection of their will to his, is the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

God. All, that enemies can do to them, does but hasten the ununking of them from themselves, by the death of what is in a union of mind with them. The passive part of the true saints Godlines, in obediently following Christs Suffering steps, is the way to his rising up into the greater strength of that life of Christ, which is the Gospel-principle of all true and wel-pleaing active obedience unto God, which is the active part of true Godlines. The losse of that life, in which, at best, we bring forth fruit but to our selves, is our undispenfable and only passe, into that newness of life, in which alone we can bring forth fruit unto God. All then, that will live Godly in the Gospel-spirit of Christ, must suffer the death of their own spirit, and what God will permit others to do to their bodies, for witnessing the same things to be suffered by them, in order to their being saved. The spirit of true Godlines, in Christ, and the Gospel-testimony thereof, is that which the world will not receive. No Man, in the corrupt or righteous spirit of his own nature, or utmost wisdom thereof, will own, but certainly reject, and be found in opposition to it, as was once *Paul's* own case. There is an absolute necessity, then, on all accounts and considerations, from God and Men, friends and foes, that he that will live Godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution. *Paul* would have Saints to expect it from Man, and submit to the will of God, therein.

Verf. 13. But evil Men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

Here is the sad condition of such as refuse to live Godly in Christ Jesus, which would dispose them patiently to suffer evil, for wel-doing, which is reckoned thank-worthy, with God (*1 Pet. 2. 16, 21.*) As followers of Christ. The highest sort of well-doing, in Gods sight, exposes to the suffering of the utmost evil, Man can do unto them. This right way of living Godly, under all sufferings, will make Men grow dayly better and better; and the contrary course will make them wax daily worse and worse, by being more deceived themselves, and deceiving others into the belief of satans lie, that everlasting Salvation is to found in the mortal first covenant life of the law, and righteousness of Man, therein. Who are these evil Men, that have this black mark and character of seducers, upon them? Such as seduce others from that Gospel-truth, themselves have known, but rebelled against. So, do they dayly grow worse and worse, till unchangably fixed in their rebellious mind, against Christs spiritual life, convincingly shewed, and offered them. And then do they express this enmity, in seducing others to the same pass, with themselves. They leave no means unattempted, to proselyte others into the same rebellion against God, themselves are resolutely hastening to a final fixure, in.

Deceiving, and being deceived.

They come in the likeness of what they are not, with design to draw others into the same errour, they know they are in. They disguise their errour, that it may
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pass current for truth. The skilfullest Artists, and Master-workmen, in this seducing Trade, are the evil angels, full of all subtilty and mischief. They have made the evil, prohibited use of their first-covenant life, in unchangable enmity to the second, in which alone they know, true blessedness is to be found. They employ all the power and subtilty of their first-creation, to draw men into the same snare with themselves. They prevailed with the *Jews*, to Crucify Christ himself, and put the World into a tumultuous uproar, in all ages, against the true testimony and words of his spirit, in his Prophets, Apostles, and witnessing Saints. Having rendered themselves unpardonable sinners against the Holy Ghost, or Gospel-spirit, under the highest Gospel-light thereof, they laid all mankind flat in the dust, at first blow, *Dead in trespasses and sins*, as the consequent of their first attempt upon *Eve*. Man then, renewed but into the same kind of life, *Adam* was created in, renders him no fit match, to encounter these potent and more subtil Enemies. The second *Adam* took and crucified that nature, at best, in which Man could never fully please God, or resist the Devil, and advanced it into a state, wherein he and his true followers may certainly do both. The first *Adam* was overcome by keeping up his first-creation-life against the second. The second overcame, by surrender of it, for the second; and aton'd the wrath of God, as to the sin of the first. How unexcusable and unpardonable then, must they needs be, that, after all experience of the dreadful consequences of the first *Adams* sin, chuse rather to sin after the similitude of his transgression, then be rendered conformable to the death of the second? Satan is furnished to seduce men to this, as having not only, all the strength and glory of his first-creation-make, but able to transform all, into the likeness of the second, so as, *if possible, to deceive the very Elect*, and pass for God himself. And apostates from Gospel-light, become his apostles and most fitly accomplished instruments, to carry on his design, upon their fellow-mortals. But the end of both will be according to their seducing practices, and rebellious works; bad enough, no doubt; *2 Cor. 11. 13, 15.* The reward of such leaders, with their blind followers, is *Eternal Death*, let them bless and please themselves while they will, with any rewards or applause, in this world. Evil angels, as false Christs, come in the dress and likeness of the true Shepherd, but inwardly are *devouring Lions*. And evil men, in the cloathing or appearance of the true sheep of Christ, are inwardly *ravining Wolves*. Is it not high time for Christs true sheep to look about them? specially while they have something of that fleshly mind in them, that is in union with them both; the Foe of their own house? Christ himself tells us, *These false Christs, and false Prophets shall shew such lying Signs and Wonders*, to back and ratify their lying doctrine, *as effectually to deceive all but the Elect*; and set them hard too, for a season; *Mat. 24. 24.* Saints are forewarned of them, to prevent their being surprized with them; *Yerf. 25.* Men joyn with Devils, to cloath all their falshoods with the nearest resemblance of Christs spiritual Gospel-truths. These evil men wax worse and worse, deceiving others, as themselves have been willingly deceived by the Devil. Evil angels wilfully deceiv'd themselves, at first (by gratifying their own desire) into a state of unchangable enmity to God, and destruction to themselves. The nat-

natural spirit in men or angels, which is but the first-creation Woman, decking herself with the princely colours of new-creation-glory, is the *Mystical Babylon*, Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the Earth, that, in this dress, carries on her work, for the satiating her self, even unto drunkenness, with the blood of Saints, the Martyrs of Jesus. John himself seeing this spirit of man and devil, clothed with the appearance of new-creation glory, as the very spiritual Church of Christ, Wondered with great admiration, to hear her called *Babylon*; Rev. 17. 3, 6. In this highest disguise of the whole *Mystical Antichrist*, and *Babylonish party*, choice saints are apt, at first blush, of this so highly adorn'd *Mystical Strumpet*, to think her the very *Spiritual Spouse of Christ*. Thus do evil men and angels joyn hand in hand, to carry on the *Mystery of Iniquity*, in the *Form of Godliness*, against the *Power thereof*, but shall not pass undetected or unpunished. Their folly and madness shall be manifest to all, at last; and all power, any longer to deceive, taken from them, to the filling them with unspeakable trouble, shame and confusion. When stripped of all power of deceiving others, and so, at their worst, on all accounts, they will be forced to acknowledge, they themselves have been deceived.

Verf. 14. *But continue thou in the things, which thou hast learned and hast been assured of; knowing of whom thou hast learned them.*

These things, are the Truths of Christ, by Paul, declared to him, and received by him, in Christ's own powerful openings of his heart to receive them, which gave him the full assurance thereof. Yet, do Timothy and other Gospel-Saints, need this Apostolical exhortation, for a continual watchfulness herein, against the Enemy, both within and without, for walking in the spirit of the Gospel, and crucifying the fleshly mind, daily, that in all the thoughts and lusts thereof, is in a contrariety to it. They that have received Christ's Gospel-truths, from his own hand, or in the undeniable demonstration of his own spirit, through the Gospel-ministry thereof, are accountable to Christ himself, in case of non-continuance therein. Such Truths, spoken and received, in such infallible authority, leave no room for the least scruple or doubting of them; nor excuse, for disobedience to them. Paul owns Timothy, as an obedient receiver of these Gospel things and truths of Christ, as the ground and reason of his advice to him, for a continuance therein, as knowing the Authentick hand, he has received them from; that spirit of Christ, that can reach the heart, and silence all reasonings or doubtings of the natural spirit. Obedience to this exhortation, will keep Timothy and other Saints, from falling under just reproof, or hindring themselves, as to a happy proficiency in Gospel-Life.

Verf.

Verf. 15. *And that from a Child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

Timothy, whose Mother and Grandmother, were true Gospel-saints, had been instructed in the knowledge of the holy Scriptures, from his youth, up; not of the letter only, which yet is the duty and concern of all to be acquainted with. But the mind of God, and full meaning of his spirit therein, is attainable only by the new light and discerning of that spirit, set up in us, that in the pen-men thereof, was the dictator of them. *Timothy* had received this great mercy, in his younger dayes, under the influencings of the spirit of Christ. The peculiar excellency of the holy Scriptures, thus known, is, that they are able to make a man wise to salvation, through his faith in, or fixed obedience to, and union with Christ, in his spiritual life.

By receiving his Gospel-spirit, for the new root and principle of their life, desire, thought, word, and action, are Saints in a like unchangable union with him, as he, therein, with the divine Father; *John* 17. 21, 23. The unsearchable divine and creature riches or fulness of Christs glorious person, the summe of all true Gospel preaching (*Ephes.* 3. 8.) lie not within the reach of the highest light, wisdom or understanding of natural man or angel. That understanding can never unlock or open these heavenly Gospel-treasures, signified in the letter of the Scriptures; no, nor receive or own them, when rightly opened and laid before it. They seem meer foolishness to it. Spiritual Objects require a spiritual eye or understanding in the beholder; else not discerned, when presented in the clearest spiritual demonstration. They that have the spirit of Truth, in the participated life thereof, in them, are furnished with its spiritual senses, and an understanding, that judges or discerns all things; *1 Cor.* 2. 14, 15. This is the true Key of Knowledge, that can unlock, open and interpret the Scriptures; fetch up the deep spiritual Mysteries and Truths thereof, into view, and so declare the whole counsel of God, therein, about the salvation of m.n. Spiritual discerning, the right hearing ear, and seeing eye, make a true seer, and man of God, that can read the very divine mind and spiritual meaning of Christ therein. The spiritual, saving, kingdom-sense of all Scripture, is so far from being obvious and easie to all understanding, that the best and highest understanding of man, never reaches one jot of it. That sort of understanding, at best, is the dark vail, and partition-wall, between man and all the Gospel truths of Scripture. All such Truths, seem the utmost of madness and folly to such men, who yet are confident undertakers at preaching Gospel. So far are such from any fitness to teach Gospel, that they are under no meet qualifications, for hearing it. Through the spiritual knowledge of Christ, and fixed obedience to it, is the Saint rendered *truly wise unto salvation*. To be wise in Christ, by the knowledge of him after the flesh, in the restored first-covenant righteous life of the Law, in their own nature, amounts to nothing, in this matter. This neither is Gospel-knowledge, nor abso-

late salvation. *Paul*, in the height of first-covenant life and wisdom, was the fiercest persecutor of the second, and verily thought he did well, therein. Till he arrived at the knowledge of Christ, in his Gospel, new-covenant spirit, and wisdom of God therein (for which he quitted all his other wisdom, and became a Fool, a no-body, as to that) he was a no-body at Gospel-knowledge.

Verf. 16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

First, Here is an account of the Scripture it self.

Secondly, Of the right Use and Benefit thereof, to Men.

To the first, *It was given by inspiration from God*, even by his creature-spirit of infallible truth, his living Word, which is called God; *John 1. 1.* And by the inspiration of the Almighty, only, can any man rightly understand them. This gives man the knowledge of that creature-life, which God calls his own, quite beyond the reach or comprehension of the natural, first-created understanding of Angel or Man. The most soaring, searching capacity of man, never reaches spiritual, and much less divine things, the *deepest things of God*. A communicated spiritual wisdom of God, in man, reaches all. In Gods spiritual light and wisdom, does man come to see the very divine light and glory; *Psal. 36. 9.* Gods giving man a discerning of divine and spiritual things, is the revelation of such things, to him. *Inspiration of God*, imports a new spiritual intellect in man, fitted to receive the discovery of divine and spiritual things. Where then are they, as to Gospel-knowledge, that scoff at inspiration and revelation, the only means, by which Scriptures were given, or can be understood? Satan himself quoted Scripture to Christ himself, in tempting him. Let the letter of Scripture be Text, and man's or satan's wisdom the Interpreter, all Scripture will be expounded, into a flat contradiction to the meaning of the holy Ghost, throughout. Mans day, or enlightened natural judgment, under satans reign; and Gods judgment-day, in Christs approaching reign, will be found in flat contradiction, as to the true meaning of all Scripture. Men despise and wonder at the right Gospel-words of Christ, and so perish in their folly, as counting all his words, foolishness, not believing the clearest declarations of his Gospel-truths; *Acts 13. 41.* *1 Cor. 1. 18.* Such, under all their pretences of preaching Gospel, are total misunderstanders, both of God, Christ, true Saints, Scriptures, and themselves. Was not *Paul* for a season, in the wisdom and righteousness of man, at the same blasphemous trade, against all Christs Gospel-truths, with his brother *Pharises*? These proud scorers and opposers of Gods wisdom and spirit, God scorns and resists; *Prov. 3. 34.* *Jam. 4. 6.* *James* quotes the *Septuagint's* exposition of *Solomons* words, as the true meaning of them. An exposition of Scripture into the true and full meaning thereof, is owned, as Scripture. Those evil *Enthusiasts*, that are under the inspiration of devils (*1 Tim. 4. 1.*) will never hit that meaning of Scriptures, that can be reached and owned, only, by *Inspiration of God*. Spiritual things can be discerned, only, by a new elected spiritual unders

understanding in Man, calculated and suited thereunto. When *Job* and his three friends were at the end of their line, as to the reach of that first-covenant wisdom and light they were in (as to the debating his case, under the Cross upon all that) *Elihu* comes upon them all, with spiritual wisdom, to decide the controversy. He found *Jobs* three friends, wholly mistaken, and himself not a little to seek, though secretly supported by he knew not what, a secret seed of spiritual life, the unchangeable good thing in him, which God saw. *Elihu*, Christs fore-running messenger, unriddles the case, *Job* 32. 37. Then the Lord himself declares the whole mystery, reason and ground of that amazing dispensation. *Elihu* waited for their words; gave ear to their reasonings in their own understandings, while they searched out words, and said all they had to say. He found *Jobs* three friends had not answered his words, nor said any thing, that was suited to convince him, nor ever could, in that sort of understanding they went to work, with; *Job* 32. 12. Having silently waited and heard all, they or *Job* could say, in their first-covenant principles and wisdom, which fell short as to the whole matter in debate, he takes the just liberty of shewing them his opinion, and so, the very thoughts and designs of God, as to the dispensation *Job* was under. This new sort of understanding in *Elihu*, put them all into a maze, so that they answered no more, but quite left off speaking; *Vers*. 15. His discourse in another spirit and wisdom, was a meer surprize to the four disputers of this world, in their own wisdom. The issue was, by a silent, quiet hearkening to this new kind of discourse, they were all brought to rights, in the happy conclusion and winding up of all. This is evident in *Job*; and more than probable in his three friends, by what the Lord required both themselves and *Job* to do on their behalf; *Job* 42. 7, 9. They entered this new-covenant with God, by sacrificing the life of the first, in truth and mystery, as well as type, as is required; *Psal*. 50. 5. This did their work, for salvation. Within the compass of natural Objects, if a learned man speak things, obvious and clear to him, before a man of no judgment, as to the principle and foundation of his discourse, tis much one as if he spoke to a tree. The most wise, rational man, is perfectly unreasonable and untreatable, in Gospel-matters, if destitute of faith, or spiritual judgment, suited thereunto.

To what purpose can a Man be discoursed, about things, he has no manner of discerning in, but denies all, root and branch? Races the very foundation of all the discourse? If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous Gospel-saints do, or say, but will be denied, by lump? The worldly spirit of Man, in all first-covenant-life, light, wisdom or learning, is willingly deaf'd by Satan, to all right Gospel-words, let any speake or write them, while they will. They that are of the worldly-spirit, in all its variety, and speak of the world, the world run after them, and embrace a smoother in thronged Auditories, out of zeal to their doctrine. They that are of God, and rightly interpret the words of his Gospel, may go seek their hearers, and find next to none. 1 *Job*. 4. 5, 6. The spirit of Christ only, in himself and saints, can unlock the sealed up Mysteries of Gods mind and will, in the Scriptures. *Peter* joyns in his testimony, with *Paul*, to this truth; 2 *Pet* 1.

20, 21. It was not the private spirit of Man, in his natural understanding, from which the scriptures came, or by which they can ever be truly interpreted. 'Tis only the publick, infallible spirit of Christ, in himself and saints, by which they were given, that can interpret them. Let this Gospel-spirit and principle of true wisdom, and infallible light (distinct from the fallible/light and wisdom of Man or Angel, in the primitive purity of their naturalls) be denied, the Gospel-saint has nothing to say. On this most false *Hypothesis* that there is no distinct kind of creature-life, Man is capable of, from what was set up, by the first-creation in him, all Gospel-doctrine falls to the ground. The gospel-spirit denied, all its openings of hearts and scriptures, is denied. The wisdom of Man will always so interpret the scriptures, as to gratify the will of Man. The scriptures speak death to both that wisdom and will. Saints, in the spirit of God, do truly prophecy or foretell, what will become of all Men; good or bad, accordingly as they fall in with, or are found in opposition thereunto. But, the private spirit and wisdom of Man, passing in swarms of Gospel-teachers and professors, as the only interpreter of the scriptures, the true publick spirit of interpretation, is reckoned a daring, presumptuous spirit, and they that come forth in it, proud affecters of singularity, fools and mad-men; *Hof. 9. 7, 8.* Thus, with *Diotrephes*, does the self-conceited private spirit, prate against the true spirit of Prophecy, with malicious words; 3d. Epistle of *John, Vers. 10.* This sort of People said, *Christ himself had a Devil and was mad. Do any of the Rulers, or Pharisees believe or regard his words? A company of ignorant Fisher-men, women, and common sinners, an impertinent sort of frivolous people, these are his hearers;* *John 7. 48, 49.* But, let Objections against Gospel, carry never such probability and plausible appearance, in a rout of big-look'd opposers; Christs Gospel will carry it, at last, and mans other Gospel (though never so universally applauded, rewarded, and swallowed down, at random) laid in the dust. Satan is for division, even amongst his own subjects; with their other Gospel, to busie and keep them in Disputes, and contests one against another, and so all of them from any suspicion of his false, or looking after the true Gospel. He embodies them all as one man, against the frightful Cross, Sword, and Fire, Christs Gospel comes upon them all, with.

Having thus seen the authority of the Scriptures, and only way of interpreting and understanding them; Consider next the great Use and Benefit thereof, unto Man.

And is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness.

First, for *Doctrine*; in the written Word, is given the true Doctrine of Christs Person, in whom is summ'd up all divine and spiritual truth, as the living word of God. On this account, Christ commands men to search the Scriptures, in a right waiting on his openings thereof to them. *For these are they that testify of me, saith he,*

he; *John* 5. 39. When rightly opened, they will appear not only profitable for *Doctrine*, and the gaining all true knowledge, but also for *Reproof* and *Correction*, as declaring his will, for the dispensing of his just and righteous judgement, to all Angels and Men, in love or wrath. And likewise for the instructing or building Men up, in true and everlasting righteousness.

Vers. 17. That the Man of God may be perfect, thorowly furnished unto all good works.

This *Man of God* is the true Saint, in the New-creature-life of Christ, which furnishes him for every good work, of the right *Gospel-kind*, which alone have the approbation of God. Such works of men after Gods own heart, wrought in his own spirit, were ingredients into *Abrahams* justification, before God; *Jam.* 2. 21, 24. Nor the deeds of the Law, performable by man in his own renewed spirit of nature; *Rom.* 4. 1, 3. This man of God is willing to subject his natural man or spirit, to reproof and correction, even to the down-right death thereof, under the Cross, in order to be instructed, or built up in the Gospel-spirit of everlasting righteousness, that perfectly enables to all good works, well-pleasing to God, and truly profitable to Man.

CHAP. IV.

Verf. 1. *I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and dead, at his appearing, and his kingdom.*

Paul gives this great and high charge to *Timothy*, in the name and authority of God and of Christ, the universal judg of quick and dead, at his appearing, and taking to himself his Kingdom. *Paul*, in the spirit of Christ, does here acknowledge the uncompounded divine Essence, or Father; and Christ, in the composition of divine and creature-natures. Hereby is this blessed Mediatour, super-abundantly qualified to be judg of all. In his creature-nature, he is said to be formed out of the Clay, as all below the pure divinity may respectively be called. But hereby is most properly pointed out, changable first-creation nature, as by him transformed into the unchangable state thereof, in personal union with his originall unchangable new-creature nature, and divine. In his divine and various creature-capacities, was Christ fitted, both to create Angels and men, and to mediate between God and them, when created; as also, to fulfil the whole mind of God, towards them, in a state of eternal life or death, as found in unchangable union with, or enmity to that spirit, in which he will judg them all. By the creature-part of his composition, is he what creatures can with, and God approves, as fitted to transact all matters between infinite divinity and meer creaturality. This, *Elihu* speaks of himself, as a type of Christ; *Job*. 33. 6, 7. Christ, as son of man, in his spiritual, kingdom-glory, will judg quick and dead, all men and Angels, good and bad; *Act*. 17. 31. *Jo*. 5. 22. 27. This will be, at his second coming, or return from heaven, the far countrey he has carried our nature into, out of its earthly, fleshy state; *Act*. 3. 19, 21. *Luk*. 19. 12. This, the Angels told the disciples; *Act*. 1. 10, 11. And, the same thing, Christ himself had told them; *Mat*. 24. 30. He will come in that life, with our nature, to judg the world, that he raised it into, out of the death of that state he first took it in, to suffer. He will appear the second time, with all his saints, in the glory of his spiritual life, discernably to all, both friends and foes. In this state, will he exercise a rule of love over saints, admitting them to be joyn't, subordinate rulers with him self, over others. And so, with them, will he exercise a rule of force, in the exercise of his irresistible power, over enemies. In these two branches of his government, will he be seen to be the universal Judge of quick

quick and dead. *Joh. 5. 21, 27.* Two sorts of mystical dead ones shall hear Christ's voice; *Verf. 28, 29.* The dead natural man of the saint, shall be fully raised up into compleat union with him, in his spiritual life. And the incorrigible enemies of Christ, another sort of mystical dead ones, shall by his all-powerful voice and call, have a resurrection of damnation. All, of both sorts, must appear before his judgment-seat on earth, both the quick, that are sentenced to eternal life, and dead, that will be sentenced to eternal death. This, will this infinite divine and infallible creature-judge, do; *Mat. 25. 31, 46.* He will exactly suit his rewards and punishments to what men have done in the body, or in their natural state, as to the lawful use thereof, in obedient submission to his cross; or unlawful exalting it in unchangeable enmity against him and his cross; *1 Cor. 5. 10.* In the full assurance of this important truth, does *Paul* charge *Timothy*, as followeth.

Verf. 2. Preach the Word, be instant, in season, out of season, Reprove, Rebuke, Exhort, with all long-suffering and Doctrine.

The Word, he is to Preach, is the spiritual truth of Scripture, as it declares Christ to be the immortal, quick, and all-powerful WORD of God, to whose all-searching eye, the thoughts and intents of all hearts, lie open; *Heb. 4. 12, 13.* When this all-piercing, sharp-sighted Judge, comes to deal with his creatures, all Doors fly open, all Disguises fall off, and the bottom Designs of all Hearts, lie naked. This true testimony to the living Word of God, do his own written Oracles give; as will be seen, when understood. And, this testimony, are Preachers to expound Scriptures into, as skilful workmen, that need not be ashamed, faithful Stewards of the Mysteries of God. This are they to be instant in, continually, in season, out of season, that is, whether men will bear, and obey; or forbear, and rebell against it; *Ezek. 2. 7.* They must also Reprove, Rebuke, and Exhort, with all long suffering and Doctrine. By partaking of the spiritual life of the living Word of God, are men enabled to see the Truth, as it is in Jesus, witnessed in the Scriptures of Truth. By being in him that is true, can they testify his Truth; and so, Set to their seal, that God is true, by owning Christ in that life, in which he is the sealed One of his Father; *John 3. 33. and 6. 27. and 1 John 5. 20.* By a new spiritual understanding heart, freely given them of God, are Saints fitted for this work. *Paul*, judging *Timothy*, thus qualified, charges him to Preach Christ, the living Word of God; and in so doing, to Reprove, Rebuke, and exhort men, that is, declare the dispensation and work of the Cross, or Gospel-spirit of Christ, that is to be submitted to, as the effectual reprove, rebuke and chastener of mans spirit of nature, even to the death of it, in order to raise men into its own everlasting life. Man, in his corrupt or righteous nature, is to be warned, reprov'd, and rebuked, in the right preaching of the Gospel and Cross of Christ; and exhorted to yield obedience to the same, as found in enmity to the everlasting righteousness of God; *Ezek. 3. 17, 21.* The preaching and work of the Cross is a continual reproof and rebuke upon man's nature, in all variety of condition, even to the death thereof. This, are true Gospel-

preachers to do, with *all long-suffering and doctrine*; patiently bearing a universal contradiction from all sorts of men, corrupt or righteous, as of a way and doctrine every where spoken against by all, but the few obedient submitters thereunto, and, for a season, even by such, as God does, *at length, give repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth.*

Verf. 3. *For the time will come, when they will not endure sound Doctrine; but, after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves Teachers, having itching ears.*

Heres the reason of his former charge to *Timothy*; the time will come, men will not endure sound doctrine, the true doctrine of Christ, in his everlasting Gospel-life. In the last and most perillous times of this world, will men be found in a more fierce and general opposition, then ever, against the spiritual life, and Gospel-truths of Christ. They will come in the nearest likeness thereto, purposely to practice the highest malice against it, for invalidating the whole testimony, and frustrating the who'e design thereof. *As wolves in sheeps-clothing*, will they, in the most subtile and dangerous manner, labour to undermine and over-throw that sound Gospel-doctrine and spiritual truth, they cannot endure. They'l neither preach, hear, bear, or receive it; but, to their utmost, oppose, decry, and quash it, as a lump of the most dangerous heresies and blasphemies. In defence of their false Goddesses, *Diana* (the first-covenant-life, in the image of the earthly, advanced into a competition with the second, in the image and spirit of the heavenly) they'l call all the true Gospel-doctrine of the heavenly, *Masqued-Popery*, worse then the barefaced grosse Idolatries of *Rome*, unpardonable iniquity. fit to be punished by *heathen Judges and Magistrates*, as Christ himself was served, and *Paul*, with other followers of him. *Away with such fellows from the earth, it is not fit they should live*; *Act. 22. 22.* The Apostle, by saying, they will not endure sound doctrine, or Gospel-truth, implies such truth, has dawning upon those that will thus reject and oppose it. And this highly aggravates their guilt, in wilfully crying down, what they can never confute, in any particular. The wisdom and words of man are not able to resist or bear up against the words of Gods wisdom; *Act. 6. 10.* When men have thus signed themselves into a fixed loathing of known Gospel-truth, they will, to gratify their own wills and lusts, heap to themselves, teachers, having itching Ears. They'l listen to the very Doctrine of Devils, that are the Fountain of all first-creation errors and falsehoods, in opposition to spiritual, new-creation light and truths; *1 Tim. 4. 1, 2.* These seducing teachers, they like, in an irreconcilable enmity to Gods divine and everlasting righteous creature spirit of truth. They hate Gods truth with a perfect hatred; and love Satans lie with a perfect love. So are they found in the most aggravated folly and wickedness, imaginable; a wilful contrariety to what they know to be everlasting truth and righteousness. This great evil will be manifest and more rife, in the last times, than ever before. They'l receive and embrace, with delight, the very inspirations and doctrines of Devils. They'l call the truly inspired Teachers of Gospel-truth, *Diabolical Enthusiasts*, and them-

themselves the only Gospel-Teachers and Hearers. All this do they, to gratify their evil-lusts, and prurient ears. They run a whoring after, greedily take in, imbibe or drink down such Doctrine, as tickles, pleases and humours their lusts, in any kind; hits their palate; smooth, self-deceiving words. As for the Gospel-truths, and right words, that grate upon their lusts; rebuke, reprove, and lie thwart to them, at every turn, they'll not endure; *Esa. 30. 10.*

Verf. 4. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto Fables.

They will turn from known Gospel-truth, to known lies and falsehoods, a fabulous divinity, a delusive imitation of Gospel, that gratifies their itching Ears, and divers lusts. They stop their Ears against the voice of the true shepherd, and set them wide open, with an itching, impetuous desire, to the smooth, but known lying words or doctrines of devils and men. At this rate, satans serpentine charmers have thronged auditories. But the hard sayings of Christs Gospel, few will come near, or away with. The Gospel-spirit speaks hard, grating words, to their itching Ears and lusts; fire, sword, war, and death, to that beloved self, and all the lusts thereof, which they resolve to humour and please, come what will. For this purpose, they wilfully turn from the known spirit of infallible truth, to the known spirit of unchangeable fallhood, with his fables and lies.

Verf. 5. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an Evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

The watching, *Timothy* is here exhorted to, must be testified by enduring afflictions, and therein, doing the work of an Evangelist, so as to give a full proof of his Gospel-ministry. This watching then, is of like import with his former charge, to preach the word, in season, and out of season, watching continually in such work and service of Christ, with a willing and ready mind. He must take all occasions for performing this service, and wait, with continual pantings after Christs farther communications of spiritual light and life, for the more abundant qualifying him, for such happy work. And he must also prepare for encreasing afflictions and persecutions to his naturall man, as he growes more cleer, strong, and eminent for this service to Christ, and his saints, in his spiritual. Both visible and invitable enemies, men and devils, will come thundring upon him, more and more, with all sorts of persecution, on his thriving in Gospel-life, and more abundant labouring in Gospel-work. As he grows more strong in such life, he will be able to bear their stronger storms of opposition, in a universal obedience to the will of God, therein. *For he that will live Godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution.* This is the common case of true Gospel-hearers, as well as speakers. But, the preachers of it, must look for the larger measure thereof. Their work renders them, men of contention with the whole Earth, all in the earthy, first-creation state of nature, corrupt or

righteous, as set up, and so turned into a spirit of lies and falshood, against the spirit of the second. They'll all be upon their backs, devising devices against them, and smiting them with the tongue. This, with design to invalidate their testimony, and give heed to none of their words. *Jer.* 18. 18. Christ himself endured such reproaches and contradictions of sinners. The righteous first-covenant teaching and professing *Jews*, said, he was a *glutton, wine-biber, friend of publicans and sinners, Sabbath-breaker, blasphemer, had a devil, and was mad.* And he warns the servant, not to expect to fare better then his Lord; *Jo.* 15. 18, 21. True saints, in general, but Gospel-teachers, in a special and extraordinary manner, must look for a full load of reproaches, hardships, and persecutions. They that are of the world, preach up the worldly, earthly, first-covenant life of restored nature, for salvation, and the whole world, all of that spirit and principle, run after them, own, applaud and reward them, as the very Gospel-ministry of Christ. There's no stopping them. Thither they'll flock, by heards, come what will; *1 Joh.* 4. 5. The humane and serpentine first-creation-beast, joyn, in their earthly, first-creation life and wisdom, so as through Gods most wise permission, to carry, in a manner, all before them. The tide runs so strong, against Christs Gospel, that there seems to be no hope of stemming it. *Rev.* 13. 3. By the death-blow, all men received, for the first sin, they have all experienced the infallible truth of Gods threatening, that in the day they did eat the forbidden fruit, in order to gratify and keep up their first-covenant-life, in which created, against the second, offered, by a new creation, they should lose it. And so did they experience that suggestion of satan, *Ye shall not die at all*, to be a most destructive lie. Yet does not this univ. sai experience, and the abundant warnings given men, in the said righteous first-covenant life of their restored nature, prevent their sinning over the very same sin, again. Yea, they wholly embrace at the very Gospel of Christ, the very primitive lie of satan to *Eve*, *ye shall not die at all.* All is safe for everlasting blessedness, in the righteousness of man, or first-covenant life of the law. When the second *Adam* has restored the life of the first, now says satan and say men, ye are new creatures. Ye can never lose it more. *Once, in Christ, and ever in Christ.* Tis your duty to hold it fast, and never let it goe, on any terms. Thus reformation passes currant for regeneration, the renewed old creature, for the new: So, the very regeneration, and new-creature, with all the Gospel-life and words thereof, are shut cleer out of doors. Such teachers hate all that slip out of their fingers, turn their ears from their ministry, to the voice of the true shepherd, and words of his wisdom. But however it fare with the spiritual sheep of Christ, in general; those teaching saints, that are subordinate shepherds, under him, must look for the largest share of serpentine enmity, to be exprest against, and executed upon them. Yet, is all this but one part of the afflictions of the Gospel, they are to endure, with Christ himself. They must also endure and obediently submit to the death-blowes of the Gospel-spirit, in its cross, or crucifying-work on the spirit of their natural man, as to the best and most righteous restored first-covenant life thereof, as found in enmity to God, and his Gospel-spirit. This spiritual circumcision and fire-Baptism, is the greatest and sorest hardship of all, to the natural

natural man of the saint. It strikes down the very life of their own will, causes them to cease from the thoughts and reasonings of their own understanding, and so, rest from all natural desire and motion of their own spirit, in the most righteous first-covenant life and wisdom thereof. All expression of malice from devils or man, against them; Christ over-rules into an exact serviceableness to this design of the cross, for bruising their heel, or natural man, to the total death thereof, in order to set up his life in them, in which, to break the serpents head, and trample all enemies, under their feet. In this deepest and forest affliction, under the cross, must we, with Christ, say, not my will, in the active power and desire thereof, be done; but thine, in the quiet passive obedience of mine, to the death. Had Christ followed the natural desire of his will, *Let this cup pass*, he had done the very thing, satan, by Peter, tempted him, to. This thing shall not be unto thee, *Thou shalt not die at all*, as he said to Eve, at first. He was at the same point, with the second Adam, by which he gained the first, to his party; *Mat. 16. 22, 23*. Such life, finally pitied and spared, brings eternal death, to men: obediently surrendered and lost, eternal life. Multitudes of Angels and men, chusing rather eternall death, then to part with the life of their humane or Angelical nature, under the Gospel-spirit of the cross, for the everlasting righteous life thereof, and natures sinless offer at such a being spared, in Christs very person, shews the extream disgustfulness of the doctrine of the crosse, to nature, at best, which yet is the only undispenable way of being saved. Nature, with all its glory, embellishments, and accomplishments, all its riches, wisdom, and righteousness, must be cut off, and taken clear out of the first-creation Land of the living, or state of life. Nothing seems more desirable to man then this, to abide in, according to the sight and measure of things, he takes, in his own understanding. 'Tis said of Christ, *Esay 53. 8. Who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living*. This was a Prophecy, that Christ should be wholly deprived of the exercise and life of his own righteous natural will or spirit. For, so it pleased the Lord to bruise, and put him to grief (*Vers. 10.*) As to leave him nothing of that generation, nothing of the changable life of nature, in him. And the same thing must be submitted to, and experienced by his followers, in order to their regeneration, or birth of a new life in them, transcendently superiour to any thing, man or Angel had in the primitive innocency of their natural beings. Who then can declare Christs generation, by the immediate divine workman-ship, as the fountain-spirit of all new-creation life, for which he did, and saints must part with all that is natural, in the first? When therefore they are brought to this utmost point of suffering, as the full proof of their love to Christ, they must readily obey his commands, as he, his fathers, for their sakes. Paul would have Timothy, watch, or provide for all sorts of inward and outward afflictions, under the cross, within; and enemies, without. The patient passing through all, in a passive silence, will be a full proof of his love to Christ, in his spiritual life. Paul gladly received Christs sentence of death, according to the law of his spiritual crosse, on the righteous life of his own spirit, which is more pungent and grievous to nature, then a thousand violent deaths of the body;

bodily, sensual part of Man. The Gospel-spirit of the second *Adam*, is the flaming sword that is to pierce thorow the living Soul of the first, in the most restor'd, righteous first-covenant Saint, in holy flesh. This is Gods way, and method of his wisdom, for setting up the life of his living word (that is both the two-edged sword and high Priest of God, that slay's Man) in man. This, *Simeon* saw and said of *Mary* the Mother of *Jesus*, that in order to a birth of Christs spiritual life, in her, who was the literal Mother of his fleshly, the Gospel-sword must pierce thorow her own soul; *Luk. 2. 35.* All these hard sayings to flesh and blood, at best, as to outward and inward afflictions, from God, men and devils; on the natural man of the Saint, must be endured by all true followers of the great Captain of our salvation, who made our nature perfect in his own spiritual al-conquering life, by suffering the death of its fleshly, changable, righteous life of the law. The same Gospel-sword was caused to approach and pierce through the living soul of the son of man in flesh, as through the soul of his literal mother. This is Gods appointed way, to the man Christ himself, or any of his followers, even manifold tribulations of their natural state, unto death it self, for entrance into his kingdom. As to outward sufferings, how should they sca'e them? They come with fire and sword, speak nothing but war and death, to all, mans natural heart, at best, is set upon. Can they come thus to sacrifice and offer up that first covenant righteous life of man, (that as set up in opposition to the second, and enmity to its cross, or death-work upon it, is their abomination, and idol of jealousy) and will not men stone them? To preach death to that, they set up as their God, and salvation, cannot but be a most provoking and tormenting testimony, through their wilful mistake of the design and advantage to them, if obedient. This was typed in the brutish gods of the *Egyptians*, *Cows* and *Sheep* the appointed Law-sacrifice to God. Shall we sacrifice the abomination of the *Egyptians*, before their eyes, and will they not stone us? *Exod. 8. 26.* This, *Moses* said to *Pharaoh*, when he bid him and his *Israelites* go and sacrifice to their God, in *Egypt*, whereas God required him to let them go, and sacrifice to him in the Wilderness; *Exod. 5. 3.* By sacrificing that which was the *Egyptians* abomination in Gods sight, they must needs do that, which would be, and render them an abomination, in their sight. This, in mystery and truth, will be the case of those that come with fire and sword, on the righteous life of nature, in which self-confidants place all their hopes of eternal blessedness. This is mans abomination, in Gods sight, rendring him mystical *Sodom*, *Egypt* and *Babylon*. The Doctrine of the Cross, then, must needs appear foolish and abominable in the eyes of such men; and, the preachers of it, accordingly treated by them, as fools and mad-men, in the very house, or amongst the first-covenant righteous people of God; *Hes 9 7 8.* The preaching of the Cross is foolishness to them that perish; but this foolish preaching, in mans vain thought, is found the only way in Gods wisdom, to save them that believe. *1 Cor. 1. 18. 21.* Those that will not submit to his doctrine of the Cross; will, in all variety of blustering opposition, fly in the faces of any that bring such hard sayings to their ears. And this must the faithful witnesses of Christs spiritual truths, patiently endure, from those that

that will not endure their sound Gospel-doctrine, and way. They must, notwithstanding all contradiction, do the work of an evangelist, or Gospel-teacher, as qualified by the life and light of Christs Gospel-spirit, for such an honourable employment. Apostles were the highest order of Gospel-teachers, which included and comprehended all the inferior qualifications or measures of Gospel-light or life, in the lower. But evangelists, as a distinct order, prepared People, for the higher ministry of Apostolical teachers.

Philip first preached Gospel to the *Samaritans*, and was received by them with great joy; *Act.* 8. 5, 8. This *Philip* was an *Evangelist*, one of the seven Deacons; *Act.* 21. 8. and 6. 5. After him, come two eminent *Apostles*, *Peter* and *John*, by whose higher and more effectual ministry and prayer, they that had gladly received the rydings of Christs Gospel-life and power, actually received the very life itself, the holy Ghost, or Gospel-spirit; *Act.* 8. 14, 17. In this high service to Christ, and their fellow-mortals, must all ranks and degrees of Gospel-declarers, Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastours and Teachers (*Ephs.* 4. 11.) expect a world of evil, from men, as Christ did, doing all things well, and patiently suffering all manner of evil for so doing, which is the character of the good servant, in mystery and truth; *1 Pet.* 2. 18, 21. Evangelists were assistants also, and fellow-itinerants, to the Apostles. *Timothy* was *Pauls* assistant at *Ephesus*, and left by him, to carry on his Gospel-work, there, in his absence, lest they turn back from Gospel-light, as the bewitch'd *Galatians* did; *1 Tim.* 1. 3. He was to charg his hearers, not to teach, regard, or hear any other, contrary doctrine, for Salvation. The full proof of Gospel-ministers, is a faithful preaching Gospel-truths, and patient enduring the Gospel-cross on their inner Man, or natural spirit, and all sorts of afflictions, oppositions and persecutions, from Men, without, for so doing. For endeavouring to do men the greatest good, they must be content to suffer the utmost evils, God will permit Men to do to them, for their good; even the furtherance of their Gospel-life, by hastning the removal of that which hinders it.

Verf. 6. For I am now ready to be offerd, and the time of my departure is at hand.

Paul, here shews, he has required nothing of *Timothy*, but what, as a true follower of Christ, he has gone before him in, by enduring all sorts of litt-ral and mystical afflictions, and that as the work of a Gospel-preacher. All sorts of outward persecution, from Men, are to be expected and endured, in and for such a ministry. As the full period and conclusion of his sufferings, he declares himself willing to offer up his bodily life, in sacrifice to Christ, as a service to the truth by him preached, and a seal to his faith, in the same. As a stout and firm souldier of Christ, he fears not the worst, devils or Men can do to him, in his now almost finished spiritual warfare. He rejoyces to be a sacrifice, in a serviceableness to the strengthening that Gospel-faith in others, begot by his Gospel-ministry; *Phil.* 2.

17, 18. He rejoiced, on a twofold account; First, In the honour, put on him, by Christ, in suffering for, and thereby sealing his Gospel-Testimony, with his Blood, as his concluding service to Christ, in this World. By his blood, he yet speaks and preaches Gospel, to the worlds end; as *Abel*, *Heb.* 11. 4. A ready parting with all other life and things, for Gospel-life, is a continued declaration of the excellency and desirableness thereof, to all succeeding generations. Secondly, Then, *Paul* rejoiced in the serviceableness he foresaw his death would be, to the confirming others faith in the Gospel-truths, by him declared. In this service to his great master, and his fellow-saints, had he a twofold compleat joy and rejoicing, as on these most blessed and profitable accounts, though worthy to suffer the utmost shame and reproach from men, even to death it self. On the account of Christ and his saints, neither the righteous life of his own spirit, nor sensual life of his body, were, at all, dear to him, when brought into competition with the truths and interests of Christ, as also concerns of his saints, therein. On these happy terms, was he ready to be offer'd up, knowing, by Gods most wise appointment, the time of his departure, was at hand. We may see this blessed temper of his spirit, all along his Gospel-ministry, when in sufferings, and death's, oft; 1 *Cor.* 4. 9, 13. 2 *Cor.* 11. 23, 33.

Verf. 7. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.

Here are two things, first *Paul's* business in the body, the fighting a good fight; Secondly, the finishing his course, in keeping the faith. To the first, This fight is the great work of all true saints, as followers of Christ. They are to look at Jesus, the great Captain of our salvation, and observe how he demeaned himself, in this race or fight, in order to a conquest; *Heb.* 12. 2. For the joy set before him, he endured the cross, and despised the shame. The matter of this joy, was the spiritual and everlasting life of his root and Father. He was never alone, in the life of the Law, because he and the Father were then one in the mind and will of his spiritual life. *John* 8. 16. 29. He fought the good fight, in the total denial of his own righteous natural will and life, and loss of it, under the cross, in obedience to the will of his Father. Thus became he Victor over his own will, and thereby over all enemies. And he despised the shame of his marred natural visage or state of life, run down into mystical poverty and death it self.

This fight of Christ, against his own will, in obedience to his Fathers, is the good fight, set before saints, to follow him in, as faithful soldiers in the same spiritual war, against the fleshly mind, at best, in them; so the rendering the life of their own will, a sacrifice to God. This had *Paul* done; and secondly, was now upon the finishing of his course, therein. And so are all saints to do, that patience may have its perfect work, by the finishing of their sufferings, on which, they will be found in an absolute and universal obedience to the will of God. In thus doing, as the third and last thing in these words, *Paul* had kept the faith. He had been faithful in his love to Christs spiritual life, wherein he is the object of saints spiritual faith

to the last drop of the mystical blood and life of his natural man ; and literal, also. His faith in Christ, kept him, as committed by him, with his whole person, unto Christ, to keep ; 1 Pet. 1. 5. 2. Tim. 1. 12.

Verf. 8. Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judg shall give me at that day : and, not to me only, but unto all them also, that love his appearing.

Heres the happy result, Paul found of the premisses ; Verf. 7. As a certain consequent of such a finishing of his course, he knew the righteous Judg would give him a Crown of righteousness, at the appointed day, and to all others also, that love, prepare for, hasten to, and yet patiently wait for that coming or appearing of the Lord, in his spiritual life, to take his kingdom. This Crown of righteousness, he will give saints, at that day, that, in love to him in that reigning life, have fought down all enemies of it, within, and without, and round about them : all fleshly life and lust of nature, with all the pleasing, but forbidden food thereof, all enticements and enticers thereunto, worldly objects and devils. They have joynd with Christ, in his spiritual life, to crucify themselves to the world, and the world to them, and so trampled the god of this world, under their feet. For this, Christ will put a happy change of raiment upon them, *Robes of everlasting righteousness*, and set a fair Mitre, or Crown upon their heads. He will change their whole natural man or *vile body*, into the likeness of his glorious Body, or our whole glorified nature in his person. This will be done to all, whose conversation is in heaven, and who thence look for this appearance of the Lord, from heaven ; Phil. 3. 20. 21. The creature, that earnestly expects and longs for this, is, peculiarly, the spiritual Saint, who has the grand concern, interest, and advantage therein, and by. Christs new-creature spirit is the heavenly House, the immediate Temple and Sanctuary of the infinite divinity, in personal union with the divine inhabitant. In this great creature-House are many Mansions, Christ is gone in our nature, to prepare for his Saints, giving forth his spiritual blessings thence, unto them, to prepare them for those places ; Joh. 14. 2, 3. Then will God put this high and everlasting honour on his saints (in the sight of his holy Angels, and in the sight of his and their enemies, wicked angels and men) for having owned him in his spiritual life and Gospel-truth, in the face of all such daring, big-look'd contradicters and blasphemers thereof. Their actual possession of the Kingdom and Crown, in a spiritual visibility, will be given them by their righteous Lord and Judg, in the publick, general view of all friends and foes, as the true loyal subjects of his new-creation-kingdom.

Verf. 9. Do thy diligence, to come shortly, unto me.

Paul was now in Rome. That Timothy did come thither, may appear, Phil. 2. 19. Philemon ; verf. 1. Heb. 13. 23. These Epistles were written from Rome and Italy, where he declares Timothy with him. Paul's desiring him here, to come to him, may seem to be on a two-fold account.

First, To strengthen him in the spiritual life and knowledge of Christ. And;
Secondly, Thereby to render him a more powerful helper to him, in the work of the Gospel, as also, to carry on such work, after his departure, now at hand;
vers. 6.

Verf. 10. For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present World; and is departed unto Thessalonica: Crescens to Galatia; Titus unto Dalmatia.

As an argumentative encouragement to *Timothy* to come to him, on the said bleis'd accounts, as thereby shewing his zeal for Gospel-truths, he shews the unhappy contrary temper in *Demas*. Through a coldness or want of love to Gospel-truths, and the witnesses of it, and love to this present world (which is enmity to God and his Gospel-truth) he had forsaken him, whom for a season he had owned and been a comfort to. Mans choosing and loving any thing of this world, the fading riches and glory of a first-covenant-life, or the lowest, dreggy sort of earthly vanities, the lowest part of the dust of this world, relating to sensual life, and so rejecting the spiritual life, glory, and things of the world to come, after convincingly shewed and offered, in Gospel-light, is great madness and folly, of a dangerous complexion. This is the black mark and sad Character of *Demas*. He departed to *Thessalonica*, a place that abounded with Enemies to Gospel-truth. *Paul* commends the *Bereans* as willing and ready receivers of it, *diligently searching the Scriptures*, for it. The *Thessalonian Jews*, got any lewd heathens, of the baler sort, to assist them, in making a tumultuous up-roar over all the City, against *Paul* and *Silas*, for their Gospel-doctrin, as teaching things contrary to the decrees of *Cesar*, saying, that there is another King, one *Jesus*. They represent them as traitours, for holding that *Jesus* was a King. This did they, after Christ was crucified and gone out of this world, whereas *Pilate*, when he was in it, and before him, said, he found no fault, at all, in him, in owning himself, to be such a King as he declared himself to be; *Joh. 18. 37, 38.* Yet, this charg against *Paul* and *Silas*, gravelled the Magistrates, troubled the People, and put all into a confusion; *Act. 17. 1, 8.* And these *Thessalonian Jews*, when they heard the word of God was preached by *Paul* at *Berea*, came thither also, and stirred up the People against him. They forced *Paul* out of *Thessalonica*; then, come and force him out thence, to *Athens*. Such a nest of waspish enemies against Gospel-truths (out of a zeal for their worldly first-covenant life of the law, in his own restored nature, holy flesh) were fit company for a backslider to retreat to, and converse with. Yet, were there some beleivers at *Thessalonica*, to whom *Paul* writ two *Epistles*. But it seemes, they were over-powered by the Jewish enemies of the Gospel. As for *Crescens* and *Titus*, that were gone from *Paul*, they may seem to be gone, on a Gospel-account; peradventure, sent by *Paul* himself. But, on what ever account gone, *Paul* was thereby left destitute of Gospel associates or fellow-labourers at *Rome*, which he uses as an argument to hasten *Timothy* to him, there.

Verf. 11. *Only Luke is with me. Take mark, and bring him with thee; for he is profitable to me for the ministry.*

This *Luke*, the beloved Physician. (Col. 4. 14.) may seem the same that writ the Gospel, and *Acts*, dedicating both those Treatises to *Theophilus*, which signifies, a lover, or friend of God. And the like honourable mention does *Paul* here make of *Mark*, as serviceable to the Gospel-truth of Christ, according to his attainment therein. This *Mark* may seem to be the same, *Paul* once refused to take with him, on which, he and *Barnabas* parted, which God ordered for the more abundant spreading of Gospel-truth, *Act. 15. 36, 41.* This *John Mark*, was Brother to that *Mary*, to whose house *Peter* came, when brought out of prison by the Angel, in answer to the incessant prayers of the Church, there, for his deliverance; *Act. 12. 5, 12.* That *Timothy* brought this *Mark*, *Sister's* son to *Barnabas*, may appear (Col. 4. 10.) where we find him with *Paul*, at *Rome*, whence he writ that *Epistle* to the *Colossians*.

Verf. 12. *And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus;*

As qualified for Gospel-work, and strengthening the faith of saints, there, by way of supply to *Timothies* absence, with him at *Rome*; and to acquaint the Church there, how matters go, as to his Gospel-work, at *Rome*. That ye may know my affairs, saith he, and how I do, *Tychicus*, a beloved Brother, and faithful Minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things; *Ephes. 6. 21.*

Verf. 13. *The Cloak that I left at Troas, with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the Books, but especially the Parchments.*

By *Books* may seem to be meant the whole Hebrew Volume of the Old Testament, *Moses* and the *Prophets*. The *Parchments*, he layes such a special charge on *Timothy*, to bring, were probably the Originals of some of his Gospel-Epistles to severall Churches, written by his own hand. What could he mean less, by *Bookes* and *Parchments*, but such important Writings (in which, himself or others had bin penmen of the Holy Ghost, and so, of divine authority) that he required such special care to be taken of?

Verf. 14. *Alexander the Copper-smith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works.*

Verf. 15. *Of whom be thou ware also, for he hath greatly withstood our words.*

Heres a sad account of *Alexander*, an *Ephesian Jew*, in enmity to Christ and his Gospel-truth, doing *Paul* much evil. The Spirit of Christ in *Paul*, advises *Timothy* and all true saints, to disown and beware of such vain babblers, and have nothing to

do with such pestilent fellows, as with *Tertullus the Jewish Orator*, call *Paul* himself so, singly and meerly on the account of his preaching Gospel. Fixed, incorrigible wilful haters of Christ and his Gospel, are saints (in a union of mind with God and Christ) to hate with a perfect, unchangable hatred; *Pf. 139. 21. 22. Paul* prays the Lord to reward him, according to his malicious practices,

For he greatly withstood our words, or Gospel-preachings.

And this, not from weaknes or ignorance, but in a wilful, incorrigible enmity to the truth, by him known. Such daring, presumptuous opposers of God, are loth-ed by him, as the worst and greatest of all sinners, that finally perish.

Verf. 16. At my first answer, no man stood with me: but all men forsook me: I pray God, that it may not be layed to their charge.

This shews the cool entertainment of his Gospel-preaching, at *Rome*. None of his hearers assisted him, when brought before *Nero* the first time, by the instigation of the devil, in unbelieving *Jews*, and his implacable enemy, *Alexander the Copper-smith*, who tis said came to *Rome*, to incense both *Jews* and Court against him) representing him as traitour against *Cesar*. The same tyrannical Heathen government gave no disturbance to his Gospel-preaching, for two whole years, at *Rome* (*Act. 28. 30, 31*) till the professing *Jews*, in enmity to the Gospel, fell to their old trade, and practice, against Christ himself, before *Pilate*. Though there were saints in *Cesars* household, a heathen Court, none had the courage to own the truth and him, in the face of such powerfull opposition. He prays, the Lord would not lay this to their charge. The beleeving *Jews* and *Gentiles* leave their most eminent Gospel-preacher, to shift for himself, against the blustering opposition of unbelieving *Jews* and *Gentiles*, backed with the imperial power of a brutish Tyrant, and his officers. He looks at this shrinking, timorous demeanour of saints, to be through weakness of the flesh, not enmity to Christs Gospel-spirit, so, prays for their pardon; hoping and praying, they may not be found guilty of the unpardonable sin, that is unto death, and not to be prayed for; *1 Job. 5. 16, 17*. The hope he had of them, left room for his prayer, on their behalf, as not guilty of the great transgression, that admits no atonement, sacrifice or intercession. Timorous *Peter* forswore his Master, when in like circumstances of triall, by *Jews* and *Gentiles*, as *Paul* was now in, at *Rome*, for the just defence of his life and the truth, by him preached, against a heap of prejudiced and unreasonable adversaries.

Verf. 17. Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the Preaching might be fully known, that all the Gentiles might bear: And I was delivered out of the mouth of the Lion.

Here is *Pauls* happy experience of the Lords love and faithfulness to him, amidst
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all his disappointments, from man. Though none stood with him in so great a danger, against such a powerfull, tumultuous opposition, the Lord stood by him, and supported him, to his unspeakable comfort. The spirit of Christ, bore him up, against all, so as still to make its spiritual truths, in his Gospel-preaching, more fully known to the *Gentiles*, to whom sent, out of the hands of his persecuting contrary-men, the *Jews*; *Act. 22. 21.* The *Gentiles*, seeing themselves, and the Gospel, despised by the *Jews*, did the more readily receive it, and were dignified with the most signal preacher of it. When the *Jews* at *Antioch* (filled with envy against both the Gospel, and the *Gentiles*,) contradicted and blasphemed the glorious Gospel-things or truths spoken by *Paul*, the *Gentiles* did the more hunger after his ministry. He therefore, with his Evangelist, and associate, *Barnabas*, turned from the rebellious *Jews*, to the obedient *Gentiles*; *Act. 13. 44. 46.* The professing first-covenant *Jews*, but unbelievers as to Gospel, *Paul* found of the same temper, every where, proudly despising common sinners, as worse then themselves; but more implacably hating spiritual saints, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, for being better then themselves. This is the *Cainish* spirit, all along, hating the true *Abels*, for their better works of righteousness, in the second covenant, then theirs in the first, which as preferred before those in the second, are downright evil; *1 Job. 3. 12.* The *Jews* forbade *Paul* and others, to preach to the *Gentiles* (*1 Thes. 2. 15. 16.*) and were mad, when he told them he was sent to them, *Act. 22. 21, 22.* This, more and more, stirred up the *Gentiles* to receive *Paul*, and his Gospel-doctrine. For these practices of the obstinate *Jews*, against Christ and his Gospel, do that People remain in blindness and unutterable confusion, under that imprecation of their wicked progenitours (*His blood be on our heads and on our Children Mat. 27. 25.*) to this day; wrath being come upon them, to the utmost. Heathen Magistrates granted toleration to their *Jewish* worship, in synagogues, all up and down the *Roman Empire*, in *Greek* and *Asiatick Cities*; yea, and at the very Metropolis, *Rome* it self. But, they could not endure, the least toleration should be given to Gospel-saints and Churches, either at home, in *Jerusalem*, or abroad, amongst the *Gentiles*, where themselves were tolerated strangers. But *Paul* waxed stronger and stronger in the Gospel-spirit of Christ, under all this opposition, that weakened and ran down his fleshly or natural man; *2 Cor. 12. 10.* All is on the right wheel, still, for the saints thriving and prospering in the life, hid with Christ, in God; which renders him a defended City, an Iron Pillar, and Brazen Wall, of invincible strength, against all opposers; *Jer. 1. 18, 19.* God overrules all persecuting enmity against the Gospel, to occasion the more abundant propagating thereof. His very suffering made the *Gentiles* to heare, and more fully to know the Gospel-truths, by him preached. And, as furnished to endure all manner of opposition to his Preaching, he was delivered out of the mouth of the twofold mystical Lion, *Nero* and the devil; or from the utmost power and rage of devils and men, in general, against the Gospel and spirit of God, the truth whereof is stronger then them all, and will prevail. Christ, by strengthening *Paul*, in his al-powerfull spirit, thats greater then all first-creation power, visible or invisible, delivers him from all his

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combined visible and invisible enemies, men and devils ; 1 Joh. 4. 4. Yea, even little Children, Babes and sucklings in spiritual life, can quell and still the enemy and avenger ; Psa. 8. 2. Much more then, was *Paul* too hard for the roaring Lion, with all his deceived earthly admirers, followers and adherents. *Paul* knew his spiritual life, to be above all death, danger, or enemies ; and that his innocent Blood would, with *Abels*, speak, and continue a loud preacher of the Gospel, to the worlds end.

Verf. 18. *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom ; to whom be Glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

In the same power or spirit of Christ, *Paul* was delivered from all enemies without, is he assur'd of deliverance from all enemies within, every evil work, and the worker thereof, in him, his natural spirit, in the fleshly mind, will, desire and thought thereof. This is the evil worker, even in saints, while it lives, in its best restored righteousness. *Paul* himself, in this, had persecuted Gospel. And, after Gospel-conversion, till fully crucified, was it the enemy to his spiritual mind ; Ro. 7. The fighting down and mortifying it, is the great business of the spiritual warfare, till utterly abolished. The righteous fleshly or carnal mind (that is enmity to God, and death to Men (Rom. 8. 6, 7.) If persisted in, and kept up) Exalts it self, with abundantly more confidence, credit, and authority, against God, and his Gospel-spirit, then the corrupt carnal mind or spirit of nature, dead in trespasses and sins. Enmity to Christs Gospel-spirit, did revive, and get up into its vigour, and strength, by the revival of him into the righteous life of his nature. The first-covenant professour, was, all along, the ring-leader in persecuting Christ and his Gospel. The heathen were drawn in, by them, to assist them, in running down Gospel truths, preachers and professours ; that their other, first-covenant Gospel might passe currant with people, for the very doctrine of the kingdom. When this carnal foe of the Saints own house, or in his very spirit and person, is crucified, dead and gone, all other foes are blown up. The highest part of the dust of this world, (the serpents food, the invisible glories, wisdom, and righteousness of the first creation-state of man or angel) when that in us, is dead, that can be tempted or gratified therewith, signifies nothing to us. *David*, *Paul*, and other Saints have long groaned under the burden of the too oft prevailing activity of their natural mind, in the desire and thought thereof. A perfect death thereof, frees from sin, for ever ; Rom. 6. 7. 1 Pet. 4. 1. When the guilty sinner in the Saint, is rightly Sacrificed, slain, and laid in the grave of Christ, there's an end of sin and sinning, for ever. The cross of Christ, on the nature of man, is God's most wise method and way, of delivering man from all his uneasy yokes and heavy burdens. When the natural understanding or eye, at best, is preferred, and fixedly opposed to spiritual light, wisdom, and understanding, then is that eye unchangably evil, and the whole body or man, full of darkness, a perfect hater of all Gospel-light, life, wisdom, and righteousness of God ; Mat. 6. 23.

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Thence-forward, all mans works of righteousness, good words, fair speeches, and discourses (seem they never so good and praise-worthy, to himself or other men) are all works of darkness, and himself therewith, a loathsome abomination to God; *Luke 16. 15.* Man fondly love his own spirit of darkness (as to all Gospel things and truths) rather then Christs Gospel-spirit of marvelous light, which his darkness can never receive or comprehend. Men hate Christs Gospel-light, because their deeds, or hidden works of darkness, and all done by them, in the righteous life of the Law, as found in unchangable enmity to the Gospel, will be discovered to be most criminally evil. *Paul* makes it a matter of solemn thanksgiving to God, that he was in a fair hopefulness and full assurance of a perfect deliverance from the life and motion of his natural spirit, as a body of sin and death; *Rom. 7. 24, 25.* And, so does he here declare, in the exercise of his strong spiritual faith, that he sees certain deliverance from this most dangerous enemy, within him, the evil worker, and every evil work thereof. The fleshly mind, perfectly slain, the spiritual mind in the saint, will enable him to do the will of God, in all things, without any let or interruption. And, as the Lord will deliver *Paul*, by the perfect death of his natural spirit or fleshly mind, from every evil work, for ever, is he sure also, that he will preserve him, unto his heavenly kingdom. *Pauls* conquest and certain preservation, implies not his deliverance from a violent bodily death, but by that, from the visible Lion, *Nero*, as by the perfect death of his whole natural man (body and spirit, too) out of the mouth of the invisible Lion, the devil. Thence-forward, has he nothing left about him, that either of them can ever touch, more. The mortal, first-covenant life of his spirit, expired compleatly with the mortal life of his body; so, was he fully, and for ever delivered from both these Lions, and all enemies, whatsoever. The perfect death of the natural spirit, under the cross, may seem seldom to be experienced by saints, till the death of the body. *Enoch* and *Elias* do seem to have arrived nearest, if not fully at it, while in the body: so, had the translation of their whole persons, into a life of immortality, without seeing death, after the usuall way and *Exit* of other men, out of this world.

Verf. 19. *Salute Priscilla and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus;*

Verf. 20. *Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum, sick.*

Here is *Pauls* Salutation to saints, with *Timothy*, at *Ephesus*; and, an account given *Timothy*, of those that had been with *Paul*, owning both and all, in the same spirit of Christ, with himself. *Priscilla*, here, seems to be that *Priscilla*, who with her husband *Aquila*, instructed *Apollos* more perfectly in the way of God. They accompanied *Paul* in his Voyage from *Corinth* into *Syria*, and after, came with him to *Ephesus*, where he left them; *Act. 18. 18, 26.* *Erastus* that abode at *Corinth*, seems the same, he sent with *Timothy*, from *Asia* to *Macedonia*; *Act. 19. 22.* *Trophimus* that he left at *Miletum*, not far distant from *Ephesus*, &c.

to be that *Trophimus* the *Ephesian*, that accompanied *Paul* to *Jerusalem*, from whom the *Jews* took occasion to raise a tumult there, against *Paul*; *Act.* 21. 29. 31.

Verf. 21. Do thy diligence to come before winter. *Eubulus* greeteth thee, and *Pudens*, and *Linus*, and *Claudia*, and all the brethren.

Paul, here, repeats his desire to *Timothy*, to hasten to him, before winter, to prevent the danger of the Sea, which he had the perillous experience of, in his Winter-Voyage to *Rome*, whence he writes this Epistle; *Act.* 27. *Paul* longs to see him, at *Rome*, as helpful to him, in preaching the Gospel to the saints, whose greetings he sends him.

Verf. 22. The Lord *Jesus Christ* be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.

Paul, here, expresses the greatness of his love to *Timothy*, in this high request on his behalf, that the Lord *Jesus Christ* would be with his spirit; that is, back and strengthen him in his spiritual life, so as more and more to render that, the only, single, prevailing principle of all his desire, thought, and action.

F I N I S.

Mistakes in the Printing.

Page 12. line 26. for lawful read unlawful. p. 43. l. 19. for si, r. is. and l. 39. for conempt, r. contempt. p. 48. l. 35. for Mat. r. Mal. p. 78. l. 2. for chil life. l. 3. for otni, imo. p. 106 l. 42. for is, his. p. 119. l. 32. r. 1 *Joh.* 4. 2, 3. and l. 35 for Prince, r. Princes. p. 139. l. 4. for else, r. life. p. 140. l. 26. for devouring r. devouring. p. 150. l. 4. for covert, convert. p. 155. l. 6. for nature, r. natural. and l. 14. for natural, r. nature. p. 183. l. 9. for from, r. form. and for form, from. Other lesser mistakes, in the pointing, the Ingenious Reader is desired to mend.

